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MYTHOLOGICAL FABLES.

TRANSLATED BY

DRYDEN, POPE, CONGREVE, ADDISON,

AND OTHERS.

PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE

USE OF YOUTH.

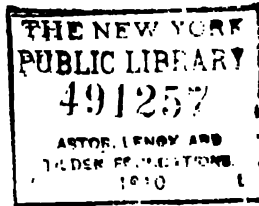
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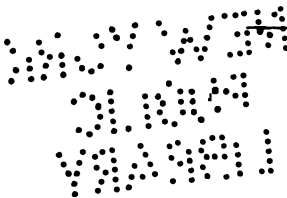
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PREFACE.

A SELECTION of Mythological Fables from the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid and other authors, is here presented to the public, in such a form, as will, it is thought, render it a desirable acquisition to the Library of Youth. In making this selection it has been found necessary frequently to alter expressions, and to omit passages which were exceptionable, the ancient authors allowing themselves a latitude which is rejected by the purer taste of modern writers. The study of Mythology constitutes an indispensable part of a liberal education, without a knowledge of which it is impossible to appreciate, or scarcely even to understand the works of many ancient authors, and particularly the poets, who have drawn from this fountain their copious supply of beautiful imagery and fanciful allusions. Painting and Sculpture are equally indebted to this source for the greater portion of their subjects, and to one unimpaired in its classic lore, the finest works of art are seldom interesting, and never understood. The Geographical and Mythological notes it is thought will be found useful, and have been frequently repeated in the course of the different fables, in order to impress them on the mind of the youthful reader.

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ERRATA.

Page 12, First line. For, "or as it is ambiguously," read; or as it ambiguously," &c.

" 22, Note. For, "*Areosto's* bust," read, Ariosto's bust.

" 36, Second line. For, "casts *and* eye," read, casts an eye.

" 91, Second line of note. For, "that the ancients imagined ~~that~~ the heavens," read, that the ancients imagined the heavens, &c.

" 92, Third line of note. For, "the wrath of Neptune could ~~not~~ be appeased only," read, the wrath of Neptune could be appeased only.

" 99. For, "the *virgin* songsters," read, the virgin songsters.

" 107, Ninth line. For, "her fruitless *toils*," read, her fruitless toil.

The following extracts from Miss Edgeworth's "Practical Education," on the value of Mythology, as connected with Classical Literature, are so in unison with the object of this work, that they are subjoined by the Editor.

"Classical poetry, without the knowledge of Mythology, is unintelligible: if children study the one, they must learn the other. Divested of the charms of poetry, and considered without classical prepossession, mythology presents a system of crimes and absurdities, which no allegorical, metaphysical, or literal interpreters of modern times, can perfectly reconcile to common sense, or common morality; but our poets have naturalized ancient fables, so that mythology is become essential even to modern literature."

"In Dr. Darwin's 'Botanic Garden,' there are some beautiful poetic allusions to ancient gems and ancient fables, which must fix themselves in the memory or in the imagination of the pupil. The sooner they are read, the better; we have felt the advantage of putting them into the hands of a boy of nine or ten years old. The ear should be formed to English as well as to Latin Poetry."

"The first mythological descriptions which our pupils read, should be the best in their kind. Compare the following account of Europa in a pocket dictionary, with her figure in a poetical gem—'Europa, the daugh-

ter of Agenor, king of the Phœnicians, and sister of Cadmus. This princess was so beautiful, that, they say, one of the companions of Juno had robbed her of a pot of paint to bestow on this lady, which rendered her so handsome. She was beloved of Jupiter, who assumed the shape of a bull to run away with her, swam over the sea with her on his back, and carried her into that part of the world now called Europe, from her name.' So far the dictionary ; now for the poet."

"Now lows a milk-white bull on Afric's strand,
And crops with dancing head the daisied land ;
With rosy wreaths Europa's hand adorns
His fringed forehead, and his pearly horns :
Light on his back the sportive damsel bounds,
And pleased he moves along the flowery grounds ;
Bears with slow step his beauteous prize aloof,
Dips in the lucid flood his ivory hoof ;
Then wets his velvet knees, and wading laves
His silky sides amid the dimpling waves.
While her fond train with beckoning hands deplore,
Strain their blue eyes, and shriek along the shore ;
Beneath her robe she draws her snowy feet,
And half reclining on her ermine seat,
Round his raised neck her radiant arms she throws ;
And rests her fair cheek on his curled brows ;
Her yellow tresses wave on wanton gales,
And high in air her azure mantle sails.
Onward he moves, applauding Cupids guide,
And skim on shooting wing the shining tide ;
Emerging Tritons leave their coral caves,
Sound their loud conchs, and smooth the circling waves,
Surround the timorous beauty, as she swims,
And gaze enamour'd on her snowy limbs.

Now Europe's shadowy shores with loud acclaim,
Hail the fair fugitive, and shout her name ;
Soft echoes warble, whispering forests nod,
And conscious Nature owns the present God."

See "*Practical Education*," Chap. XIII.
on *Classical Literature*.

"The taste for poetry must be prepared by the culture of the imagination. The united powers of music and poetry could not have triumphed over Alexander, unless his imagination had assisted 'the mighty master.'"

"With downcast looks the joyless victor sat,
Revolving in his altered soul
The various turns of chance below ;
And now and then a sigh he stole,
And tears began to flow."

"The sighs and the tears were the consequences of Alexander's own thoughts, which were only recalled by kindred sounds."

"There are an infinite variety of associations, by which the orator has power to rouse the imagination of a person of cultivated understanding; there are comparatively few, by which he can amuse the fancy of illiterate auditors. It is not that they have less imagination than others; they have equally the power of raising vivid images; but there are few images which can be recalled to them: the combinations of their ideas are confined to a small number, and words have no poetic or literary associations in their minds: even amongst children, this difference between the power we have over the cultivated and uncultivated mind, early appears. A laurel leaf is to the eye of an illiterate boy nothing more than a shrub with a shining, pale-green, pointed leaf: recall the idea of that shrub by

the most exact description, it will affect him with no peculiar pleasure : but associate early in a boy's mind the ideas of glory, of poetry, of Olympic crowns, of Daphne and Apollo ; by some of these latent associations the orator may afterwards raise his enthusiasm."

*See "Practical Education," Chap. XXII.
Taste and Imagination.*

MYTHOLOGICAL FABLES.

CREATION OF THE WORLD.

Of bodies changed to various forms I sing :
Ye gods, from whom these miracles did spring,
Inspire my numbers with celestial heat,
Till I my long, laborious work complete ;
And add perpetual tenour to my rhymes,
Deduced from Nature's birth to Cæsar's times.*

Before the seas, and this terrestrial ball,
And heaven's high canopy that covers all,
One was the face of Nature ; if a face :
Rather a rude and indigested mass :
A lifeless lump, unfashioned and unframed,
Of jarring seeds, and justly Chaos named :
No sun was lighted up the world to view,
No moon did yet her blunted horns renew ;
Nor yet was earth suspended in the sky,
Nor poised, did on her own foundations lie ;
Nor seas about the shores their arms had thrown ;
But earth, and air, and water were in one.
Thus air was void of light, and earth unstable,
And water's dark abyss unnavigable.
No certain form on any was impress'd,
All were confused, and each disturbed the rest.
For hot and cold were in one body fix'd,
And soft with hard, and light with heavy mix'd.
But God, or Nature, while they thus contend,
To these intestine discords put an end.

* To Cæsar's times. Ovid flourished in the time of Emperor Augustus, who, before his elevation to the throne was named Octavius Cæsar.

Then earth from air, and seas from earth, were driven,
 And grosser air sunk from ethereal heaven.
 Thus disemboil'd they take their proper place ;
 The next of kin contiguously embrace ;
 And foes are sunder'd by a larger space.
 The force of fire ascended first on high,
 And took its dwelling in the vaulted sky :
 Then air succeeds, in lightness next to fire,
 Whose atoms from unactive earth retire ;
 Earth sinks beneath, and draws a numerous throng
 Of ponderous, thick, unwieldy, ~~needs~~ ^{masses} along.
 About her coasts unruly waters roar,
 And, rising on a ridge, insult the shore.
 Thus when the god, whatever god was he,
 Had form'd the whole, and made the parts agree,
 That no unequal portions might be found,
 He moulded earth into a spacious round :
 Then, with a breath, he gave the winds to blow,
 And bade the congregated waters flow.
 He adds the running springs, and standing lakes ;
 And bounding banks for winding rivers makes.
 Some part, in earth are swallow'd up, the most
 In ample oceans disembogued, are lost.
 He shades the woods, the valleys he restrains
 With rocky mountains, and extends the plains.
 And as five zones the ethereal regions bind,
 Five, correspondent, are to earth assign'd :
 The sun, with rays directly darting down,
 Fires all beneath, and burns the middle zone ;
 The two beneath the distant poles complain
 Of endless winter, and perpetual rain.
 Betwixt the extremes, two happier climates hold
 The temper that partakes of hot and cold.
 The fields of liquid air, enclosing all,
 Surround the compass of this earthly ball :
 The lighter parts lie next the fires above,
 The grosser near the watery surface move :
 Thick clouds are spread and storms engender there,
 And thunder's voice, which wretched mortals fear,
 And winds, that on their wings cold winter bear.
 Nor were those blustering brethren left at large,
 On seas and shores their fury to discharge :
 Bound as they are, and circumscribed in place
 They rend the world, resistless, where they pass,

And mighty marks of mischief leave behind ;
 Such is the rage of their tempestuous kind.
 First Eur^{us}* to the rising morn is sent,
 (The regions of the balmy continent.)
 And eastern realms, where, early, Persians run
 To greet the bless'd appearance of the sun.
 Westward, the wanton zephyr† wings his flight,
 Pleased with the remnants of departing light.
 Fierce Boreas,‡ with his offspring issues forth
 To invade the frozen wagon of the north ;
 While frowning Auster§ seeks the southern sphere,
 And rots, with endless rain, the unwholesome year.
 High o'er the clouds, and empty realms of wind,
 The god a clearer space for heaven design'd ;
 Where fields of light, and liquid ether flow,
 Freed from the ponderous dregs of earth below.
 Scarce had the power distinguish'd these, when straight
 The stars no longer overlaid with weight,
 Exert their heads from underneath the mass,
 And upward shoot, and kindle as they pass,
 And with diffusive light adorn their heavenly place.
 Then, every void of nature to supply,
 With forms of gods he fills the vacant sky ;
 New herds of beasts he sends the plains to share ;
 New colonies of birds to people air ;
 And to their oozy beds the finny fish repair.
 A creature of a more exalted kind
 Was wanting yet, and then was Man design'd ;
 Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
 For empire form'd, and fit to rule the rest :
 Whether with particles of heavenly fire
 The God of nature did his soul inspire
 Or earth, but new divided from the sky,
 And pliant, still retained the ethereal energy,
 Which wise Prometheus tempered into paste,
 And, mix'd with living streams, the godlike image cast.

* Eur^{us} a wind blowing from the east-south-east parts of the world.

† Zephyrus, one of the winds ; said to produce flowers and fruits by the sweetness of his breath. He was supposed to be the same as the west wind.

‡ Boreas, the north wind.

§ Auster, the wind blowing from the south, whose breath was pernicious to flowers as well as to health. He was the parent of rain.

Thus, while the mute creation downward bend
 Their sight and to their earthly mother tend,
 Man looks aloft, and with erected eyes
 Beholds his own hereditary skies.
 From such rude principles our form began,
 And earth was metamorphosed into Man.

THE GOLDEN AGE.*

The golden age was first, when man, yet new,
 No rule but uncorrupted reason knew,
 And, with a native bent did good pursue.
 Unforced by punishment, unawed by fear,
 His words were simple, and his soul sincere ;

* The Golden Age. Saturn reigned during the period designated as the Golden Age. He was the son of Cœlus or Uranus, (the most ancient of all the gods,) and Terra or Tithea, the Earth. Having dethroned his father, by whom he was treated with great unkindness, he with the consent of his elder brother Titan, took possession of the kingdom, on condition however, that he should raise no male children. In pursuance of this agreement Saturn destroyed his sons as soon as they were born, until at length Rhea, his wife, deceiving him respecting the birth of Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, whom she concealed, was thus enabled to preserve part of her male offspring. Titan, however, discovering the fraud, made war against Saturn, assisted by his brothers the Titans, and this war, so celebrated in Mythology, is known as "the war of the Titans." Saturn being defeated, was imprisoned with his wife Rhea, but when his son Jupiter (who was secretly educated in the island of Crete) had attained the age of manhood, he hastened to the assistance of his parents whom he released from prison, and having overcome the Titans, restored his father to his throne. An Oracle having foretold that Saturn would be driven from his kingdom by a son, he became jealous of Jupiter, and unmindful of the benefits which he had received from him, conspired against his life. Jupiter on discovering this treachery and ingratitude, dethroned his father and compelled him to fly from his resentment. Saturn took refuge in Latium, (Italy,) where he was kindly received by Janus king of the country, who made him the partner of his throne. His reign was so mild, beneficent, and virtuous, that mankind have called it the golden age, to intimate the happiness and tranquillity which the earth then enjoyed. Saturn is generally represented as an old man, borne down by age and infirmity. He holds a scythe in his right hand, and also a serpent which bites its own tail, the emblem of time and of the revolution of the year. In his left hand he holds a child which he raises up as if to devour, that being the manner in which he had formerly destroyed his male offspring.

Needless was written law where none oppress'd ;
 The law of man was written in his breast :
 No suppliant crowds before the judge appear'd,
 No court erected yet, nor cause was heard,
 But all was safe ; for conscience was their guard.
 The mountain trees in distant prospect please,
 Ere yet the pine descended to the seas ;
 Ere sails were spread new oceans to explore,
 And happy mortals, unconcern'd for more,
 Confined their wishes to their native shore.
 No walls were yet, nor fence, nor moat, nor mound,
 Nor drum was heard, nor trumpet's angry sound,
 Nor swords were forged ; but, void of care and crime,
 The soft creation slept away their time.
 The teeming earth, yet guiltless of the plough,
 And unprovoked, did fruitful stores allow :
 Content with food which nature freely bred,
 On wildings and on strawberries they fed ;
 Cornels and brambleberries gave the rest,
 And falling acorns furnish'd out a feast.
 The flowers unsown, in fields and meadows reign'd ;
 And western winds immortal spring maintain'd.
 In following years the bearded corn ensued
 From earth unask'd, nor was that earth renew'd.
 From veins of valleys milk and nectar broke,
 And honey oozing through the pores of oak.

 THE SILVER AGE.

BUT when good Saturn, banish'd from above,
 Was driven to hell, the world was under Jove.*
 Succeeding times a silver age behold,
 Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold.
 Then summer, autumn, winter, did appear,
 And spring was but a season of the year ;
 The sun his annual course obliquely made,
 Good days contracted, and enlarged the bad.

* Jupiter now become sole monarch of the universe, divided his possessions with his brothers, giving to Neptune the empire of the Sea, that of the Infernal Regions to Pluto, and reserving to himself the kingdom of Heaven.

THE IRON AGE.

Then air with sultry heats began to glow,
 The wings of winds were clogg'd with ice and snow,
 And shivering mortals into houses driven,
 Sought shelter from the inclemency of heaven.
 Those houses, then, were caves or homely sheds,
 With twining osiers fenced, and moss their beds.
 Then ploughs, for seed, the fruitful furrows broke,
 And oxen labour'd first beneath the yoke.

THE BRAZEN AGE.

To this came next in course the Brazen Age :
 A warlike offspring, prompt to bloody rage,
 Not impious yet.

THE IRON AGE.

HARD steel succeeded then,
 And stubborn as the metal were the men.
 Truth, modesty, and shame, the world forsook ;
 Fraud, avarice, and force, their places took.
 Then sails were spread to every wind that blew,
 Raw were the sailors and the depths were new ;
 Trees, rudely hollow'd, did the waves sustain,
 Ere ships in triumph plough'd the watery plain.
 Then landmarks limited to each his right ;
 For all before was common as the light.
 Nor was the ground alone required to bear
 Her annual income to the crooked share,
 But greedy mortals rummaging her store,
 Digg'd from her entrails first the precious ore
 (Which next to hell the prudent gods had laid),
 And that alluring ill to sight display'd.
 Thus cursed steel, and more accursed gold,
 Gave mischief birth, and made that mischief bold :
 And double death did wretched man invade,
 By steel assaulted, and by gold betray'd.
 Now (brandish'd weapons glittering in their hands)
 Mankind is broken loose from moral bands :

No rights of hospitality remain ;
 The guest, by him who harbour'd him, is slain ;
 The son-in-law pursues the father's life ;
 The wife her husband murders, he the wife ;
 The step-dame poison for the son prepares ;
 The son inquires into his father's years ;
 Faith flies, and piety in exile mourns ;
 And justice, here oppress'd, to heaven returns.

THE GIANTS' WAR.*

NOR were the gods themselves more safe above,
 Against beleaguer'd heaven the giants move,
 Hills piled on hills, on mountains mountains lie,
 To make their mad approaches to the sky ;
 Till Jove, no longer patient, took his time
 To avenge with thunder their audacious crime.
 Red lightning play'd along the firmament,
 And their demolish'd works to pieces rent.
 Singed with the flames, and with the bolts transfix'd ;
 With native earth their blood the monsters mix'd.
 The blood endued with animating heat,
 Did in the teeming earth, new sons beget ;
 They, like the seed from which they sprung, accursed,
 Against the gods immortal hatred nursed ;
 An impious, arrogant, and cruel brood,
 Expressing their original from blood.

Which, when the king of gods beheld from high
 (Withal revolving in his memory
 What he himself had found on earth of late,
 Lycaon's† guilt, and his inhuman treat),
 He sigh'd, nor longer with his pity strove,
 But kindled to a wrath becoming Jove.
 Then call'd a general council of the gods,

* The Giants were men of enormous stature, and endued with strength in proportion to their size. They conspired to dethrone Jupiter, and attempted to scale the heavens by piling Mount Ossa on Mount Pelion. The deities, alarmed, fled into Egypt, where to elude the pursuit of their adversaries they assumed the forms of various animals. The Giants were finally subdued by Jupiter.

† Lycaon's guilt. See story of Lycaon, page 9.

Who, summon'd, issued from their bless'd abodes,
 And fill the assembly with a shining train.
 A way there is in heaven's expanded plain,
 Which, when the skies are clear, is seen below,
 And mortals by the name of Milky know.
 The groundwork is of stars; through which the road
 Lies open to the Thunderer's abode.

When all were placed in seats distinctly known,
 And he their father, had assumed the throne,
 Upon his ivory sceptre first he lean'd,
 Then shook his head, that shook the firmament:
 Earth, air, and seas, obey'd the almighty nod,
 And, with a general fear, confess'd the god;
 At length, with indignation, thus he broke
 His awful silence, and the powers bespoke:

"I was not more concern'd in that debate
 Of empire, when our universal state
 Was put to hazard, and the giant race
 Our captive skies were ready to embrace;
 For though the foe was fierce, the seeds of all
 Rebellion sprung from one original;
 Now, wheresoever ambient waters glide,
 All are corrupt, and all must be destroy'd.
 Let me this holy protestation make;
 By hell, and hell's inviolable lake,
 I tried whatever in the godhead lay;
 But gangrened members must be lopp'd away,
 Before the nobler parts are tainted to decay.

There dwells below a race of demi-gods,
 Of nymphs in waters, and of fauns in woods,
 Who though not worthy yet ... heaven to live,
 Let them at least enjoy that earth we give.
 Can these be thought securely lodg'd below,
 When I myself who no superior know,
 I, who have heaven and earth at my command,
 Have been attempted by Lycaon's hand!"

At this a murmur through the synod went,
 And, with one voice, they vote his punishment.
 Jove, with his hand and voice, did first restrain
 Their murmurs, then resum'd his speech again.
 The gods to silence were compos'd, and sat
 With reverence, due to his superior state.

"Cancel your pious cares; already he
 Has paid his debt to justice and to me;

THE TRANSFORMATION OF LYCAON INTO A WOLF. '9

Yet what his crimes, and what my judgments were,
Remains for me thus briefly to declare."

THE TRANSFORMATION OF LYCAON INTO A WOLF.

JUPITER having visited the earth in disguise, passed through the dominions of Lycaon, king of Arcadia, by whose subjects he was received and honoured as a God. Lycaon only, pretended to doubt his divinity, and in order to test it, served up human flesh at his table. This impiety so incensed Jupiter, that he destroyed the monarch's palace, and transformed him into a Wolf.

The clamours of this vile degenerate age,
The cries of orphans, and the oppressor's rage,
Had reach'd the stars: "I will descend," said I,
"In hope to prove this loud complaint a lie."
Disguis'd in human shape I travell'd round
The world, and more than what I heard, I found.
O'er Mænalus* I took my steepy way,
By caverns infamous for beasts of prey;
Then crossed Cyllene,† and the piny shade
More infamous, by cursed Lycaon made:
Dark night had cover'd heaven and earth before
I enter'd his inhospitable door.
Just at my entrance, I display'd the sign
That somewhat was approaching of divine:
The prostrate people pray, the tyrant grins,
And adding profanation to his sins,
"I'll try," said he, "and if a god appear,
To prove his deity shall cost him dear."
'Twas late, the graceless wretch my death prepares,
When I should soundly sleep, oppress'd with cares:
This dire experiment he chose to prove
If I were mortal, or undoubted Jove:
But first he had resolved to taste my power.
Not long before, but in a luckless hour,

* Mænalus, a mountain in the south-eastern part of Arcadia, in Greece. The modern name is Roino.

† Cyllene, the loftiest mountain of Arcadia, in Greece. The modern name is Zyria.

10 THE TRANSFORMATION OF LYCAON INTO A WOLF.

Some legates, sent from the Molossian* state,
Were on a peaceful errand come to treat ;
Of these he murders one, he boils the flesh
And lays the mangled morsels in a dish,
Some part he roasts, then serves it up, so dress'd,
And bids me welcome to this human feast.
Moved with disdain, the table I o'turned,
And with avenging flames the palace burn'd.
The tyrant, in a fright, for shelter gains
The neighb'ring fields, and scours along the plains ;
Howling he fled, and fain he would have spoke,
But human voice his brutal tongue forsook ;
About his lips the gather'd foam he churns,
And, breathing slaughters, still with rage he burns,
But on the bleating flock his fury turns.
His mantle, now his hide, with rugged hairs
Cleaves to his back, a famish'd face he bears,
His arms descend, his shoulders sink away,
To multiply his legs for chase of prey ;
He grows a wolf, his hoariness remains,
And the same rage in other members reigns,
His eyes still sparkle in a narrower space,
His jaws retain the grin and violence of his face.

"This was a single ruin, but not one
Deserves so just a punishment alone.
Mankind's a monster, and the ungodly times
Confederate into guilt, are sworn to crimes ;
All are alike involved in ill, and all
Must by the same relentless fury fall."
Thus ended he ; the greater gods assent,
By clamours urging his severe intent,
The less fill up the cry for punishment :
Yet still with pity they remember man,
And mourn as much as heavenly spirits can.
They ask, when those were lost of human birth,
What he would do with all this waste of earth ;
If his dispeopled world he would resign
To beasts, a mute and more ignoble line ;

* Molossis, a country in Epirus. (Epirus corresponds to the Lower Albania of the present day.)

Neglected altars must no longer smoke,
 If none were left to worship and invoke.
 To whom the father of the gods replied :
 " Lay that unnecessary fear aside,
 Mine be the care new people to provide ;
 I will from wondrous principles ordain
 A race unlike the first, and try my skill again."

Already had he toss'd the flaming brand,
 And roll'd the thunder in his spacious hand,
 Preparing to discharge on seas and land ;
 But stopp'd, for fear thus violently driven,
 The sparks should catch his axle-tree of heaven ;
 Remembering in the Fates, a time when fire
 Should to the battlements of heaven aspire,
 And all his blazing worlds above should burn,
 And all the inferior globe to cinders turn.
 His dire artillery thus dismissed, he bent
 His thoughts to some securer punishment,
 Concludes to pour a watery deluge down,
 And what he durst not burn, resolves to drown.

 THE DELUGE OF DEUCALION.*

DEUCALION was the son of Prometheus,† and married Pyrrha, the daughter of his uncle Epimetheus. In his age, (1503 B. C.) the whole earth was overwhelmed by a deluge, and all mankind perished except Deucalion and his wife ; he having by his father's advice constructed a boat, they fled to it for safety, and were wafted on the top of Mount Parnassus.‡ As soon as the waters had retired from the surface of the earth, they repaired to the Oracle of Themis,§ where, offering up their prayers at the shrine of the goddess, they humbly implored her protection and advice. The Oracle directed them to renew the human race by throwing

* The Deluge of Deucalion took place in Thessaly, a country of Greece, 1503 B. C.

† Prometheus. See story of Prometheus, note.

‡ Mount Parnassus, a lofty mountain in Phocis, a country of Greece.

§ Themis was worshipped as a Divinity, who rewarded virtue and punished vice. She was the first to whom the inhabitants of the earth raised temples.

behind their backs the stones of the earth ; (or as it ~~is~~ ambiguously expressed itself "the bones of their mighty mother") they ~~obeyed~~ and the stones thrown by Deucalion became men, and those by ~~Pyrrha, women~~.

The northern breath, that freezes floods, Jove binds,
 With all the race of cloud dispelling winds ;
 The south he loosed, who night and horror brings,
 And fogs are shaken from his flaggy wings ;
 From his divided beard two streams he pours,
 His head and rheumy eyes distil in showers.
 With rain his robe and heavy mantle flow,
 And lazy mists are lowering on his brow ;
 Still as he swept along with his clench'd fist
 He squeezed the clouds, the imprison'd clouds resist :
 The skies, from pole to pole, with peals resound,
 And showers enlarged, come pouring on the ground ;
 Then, clad in colours of a various die,
 Junonian Iris* brings a new supply
 To feed the clouds ; impetuous rain descends,
 The bearded corn beneath the burden bends,
 Defrauded clowns deplore their perish'd grain,
 And the long labours of the year are vain.
 Nor from his patrimonial heaven alone
 Is Jove content to pour his vengeance down :
 Aid from his brother of the seas† he craves,
 To help him with auxiliary waves.
 The watery tyrant calls his brooks and floods,
 Who roll from mossy caves their moist abodes,
 And with perpetual urns his palace fill,
 To whom, in brief, he thus imparts his will :

* Junonian Iris. Iris was the messenger of the gods and of Juno in particular. She is represented with wings, sitting on a rain bow, (of which she is the goddess,) and dressed in a robe of variegated and brilliant colours. She is also described as supplying the clouds with water to deluge the world.

† "Aid from his brother of the seas he craves." Neptune, the god of the sea, was the brother of Jupiter. Neptune is generally represented as a venerable and majestic man, sitting in a chariot made of a sea-shell and drawn by dolphins or sea-horses ; sometimes he is drawn by winged horses, and stands up, with his trident in his hand, and surrounded by tritons and mermaids.

" Small exhortation needs : your powers employ,
And this bad world, so Jove requires, destroy ;
Let loose the reins to all your watery store,
Bear down the dams, and open every door."

The floods, by nature enemies to land,
And proudly swelling with their new command,
Remove the living stones that stopp'd their way,
And, gushing from their source, augment the sea.
Then, with his mace their monarch struck the ground ;
With inward trembling earth receiv'd the wound,
And rising streams a ready passage found.
The expanded waters gather on the plain,
They float the fields, and overtop the grain :
Then rushing onwards, with a sweepy sway,
Bear flocks, and folds, and lab'ring hinds away.
Nor safe their dwellings were, for, sapp'd by floods,
Their houses fell upon their household gods.
The solid piles, too strongly built to fall,
High o'er their heads behold a watery wall.
Now seas and earth were in confusion lost ;
A world of waters and without a coast.

One climbs a cliff ; one in his boat is borne
And ploughs above where late he sow'd his corn ;
Others o'er chimney-tops and turrets row,
And drop their anchors on the meads below,
Or downward driven, they bruise the tender vine,
Or toss'd aloft, are knock'd against a pine.
And where, of late, the kids had cropp'd the grass,
The monsters of the deep now take their place ;
Insulting Nereids on the cities ride,
And wondering dolphins o'er the palace glide ;
On leaves and masts of mighty oaks they browse,
And their broad fins entangle in the boughs :
The frighted wolf now swims among the sheep ;
The yellow lion wanders in the deep ;
His rapid force no longer helps the boar ;
The stag swims faster than he ran before ;
The fowls, long beating on their wings in vain,
Despair of land, and drop into the main ;
Now hills and vales no more distinction know,
And levell'd nature lies oppress'd below ;
The most of mortals perish in the flood,
The small remainder die for want of food.

A mountain of stupendous height there stands
 Betwixt the Athenian and Bœotian lands,
 The bound of fruitful fields, while fields they were,
 But then a field of waters did appear :
 Parnassus* is its name, whose forky rise
 Mounts through the clouds and mates the lofty skies ;
 High on the summit of this dubious cliff,
 Deucalion wafting, moor'd his little skiff ;
 He with his wife were only left behind
 Of perish'd man ; they two were human kind.
 The mountain nymphs and Themist† they adore,
 And from her oracles relief implore.
 The most upright of mortal men was he ;
 The most sincere and holy woman, she.

When Jupiter, surveying earth from high,
 Beheld it in a lake of water lie,
 That where so many millions lately lived,
 But two, the best of either sex, survived ;
 He loosed the northern wind, fierce Boreas‡ flies,
 To puff away the clouds and clear the skies ;
 Serenely while he blows, the vapours driven,
 Discover heaven to earth, and earth to heaven.
 The billows fall, while Neptune lays his mace
 On the rough sea, and smooths its furrow'd face.
 Already Triton§ at his call, appears
 Above the waves, a Tyrian robe he wears,
 And in his hand a crooked trumpet bears.
 The sovereign bids him peaceful sounds inspire,
 And give the waves the signal to retire.
 His writhen shell he takes, whose narrow vent
 Grows by degrees into a large extent,
 Then gives it breath ; the blast with doubling sound
 Runs the wide circuit of the world around ;

* Parnassus, a mountain of Phocis, in Greece. It had two summits, one of which was sacred to Apollo and the Muses. The Greeks had a tradition that whoever slept on this mountain, became either an inspired poet, or mad.

† Themis, was worshipped as a Divinity who rewarded virtue, and punished vice ; she was the first to whom the inhabitants of the earth raised temples.

‡ Boreas, the name of the north wind.

§ Triton was a sea-deity, and so powerful, that he could calm the ocean and abate storms at pleasure. He is represented of a human form above the waist, and like a dolphin below ; he has the fore feet of a horse, and blows a large conch or sea-shell.

The sun first heard it, in his early east,
 And met the rattling echoes in the west ;
 The waters, listening to the trumpet's roar,
 Obey the summons, and forsake the shore.

A thin circumference of land appears,
 And earth, but not at once, her visage rears,
 And peeps upon the seas from upper grounds ;
 The streams, but just contained within their bounds,
 By slow degrees into their channels crawl ;
 And earth increases as the waters fall ;
 In longer time the tops of trees appear,
 Which mud on their dishonour'd branches bear.

At length the world was all restor'd to view,
 But desolate, and of a sickly hue ;
 Nature beheld herself, and stood aghast,
 A dismal desert, and a silent waste.

Which when Deucalion, with a piteous look,
 Beheld, he wept, and thus to Pyrrha spoke ;
 " O wife ! O sister ! O of all thy kind
 The best, and only creature left behind,
 By kindred, love, and now by dangers join'd ;
 Of multitudes who breath'd the common air,
 We two remain ; a species in a pair ;
 The rest the seas have swallow'd ; nor have we
 Ev'n of this wretched life a certainty.
 The clouds are still above ; and while I speak,
 A second deluge o'er our heads may break.
 Should I be snatch'd from hence, and thou remain,
 Without relief, or partner of thy pain,
 How could'st thou such a wretched life sustain ?
 Should I be left, and thou be lost, the sea
 That buried her I loved, should bury me.
 O could our father* his old arts inspire,
 And make me heir of his informing fire,
 That so I might abolish'd man retrieve,
 And perish'd people in new souls might live !
 But Heaven is pleas'd, nor ought we to complain,

* Prometheus (the father of Deucalion) formed a man of clay, and animated him with fire which he stole from heaven. Jupiter was so incensed at his presumption, that he ordered Mercury to chain him to a rock on Mount Caucasus, where a vulture preyed upon his liver, which, that his punishment might be endless, was renewed by night in proportion to its decrease by day. Hercules finally killed the vulture, and released Prometheus from his confinement,

That we, the examples of mankind remain."
 He said: the careful couple join their tears,
 And then invoke the gods with pious prayers.
 Thus, in devotion having eased their grief,
 From sacred oracles they seek relief,
 And to Cephisus* brook their way pursue;
 The stream was troubled, but the ford they knew;
 With living waters in the fountain bred,
 They sprinkle first their garments and their head,
 Then took the way which to the temple led.
 The roofs were all defiled with moss and mire;
 The desert altars void of solemn fire.
 Before the gradual prostrate they adored,
 The pavement kiss'd, and thus the saint implor'd:
 "O righteous Themis, if the powers above
 By prayers are bent to pity, and to love;
 If human miseries can move their mind;
 If yet they can forgive, and yet be kind;
 Tell how we may restore, by second birth,
 Mankind, and people desolated earth."
 Then thus the gracious goddess, nodding, said:
 "Depart, and with your vestments veil your head,
 And stooping lowly down, with loosen'd zones,
 Throw each behind your backs, your mighty mother's bones."
 Amazed the pair, and mute with wonder, stand,
 Till Pyrrha first refused the dire command.
 "Forbid it Heaven," said she, "that I should tear
 Those holy reliques from the sepulchre!"
 They ponder'd the mysterious words again
 For some new sense; and long they sought in vain:
 At length Deucalion clear'd his cloudy brow,
 And said, "the dark enigma will allow
 A meaning, which, if well I understand,
 From sacrilege will free the god's command:
 This Earth our mighty mother is, the stones
 In her capacious body are her bones:
 These we must cast behind." With hope and fear
 The woman did the new solution hear;
 The man diffides in his own augury,
 And doubts the gods; yet both resolve to try.
 Descending from the mount, they first unbind

* Cephisus, a celebrated river of Greece, that rises in Phocis. Its modern name is Mauro Potamo,

Their vests, and veil'd, they cast the stones behind :
 The stones (a miracle to mortal view,
 But long tradition makes it pass for true)
 Did first the rigour of their kind expel,
 And suppl'd into softness as they fell ;
 Then swell'd, and swelling by degrees, grew warm,
 And took the rudiments of human form.
 Imperfect shapes : in marble such are seen,
 When the rude chisel does the man begin ;
 While yet the roughness of the stone remains,
 Without the rising muscles and the veins.
 The sappy parts, and next resembling juice,
 Were turn'd to moisture for the body's use,
 Supplying humours, blood, and nourishment ;
 The rest, too solid to receive a bent,
 Converts to bones ; and what was once a vein,
 Its former name and nature did retain.
 By help of power divine, in little space,
 What the man threw assum'd a manly face,
 And what the wife, renew'd the female race.
 Hence we derive our nature ; born to bear
 Laborious life, and harden'd into care.

 THE SERPENT PYTHON.

THE celebrated Serpent Python, sprang from the mud
 and stagnated waters, which remained on the surface of the
 earth after the deluge of Deucalion. Apollo, attacked the
 monster, and killed him with his arrows ; in commemoration
 of which victory, he instituted the Pythian games.*

The rest of animals, from teeming earth
 Produced, in various forms received their birth.
 Some were of several sorts produced before ;
 But of new monsters, earth created more.
 Unwillingly, but yet she brought to light,

* The Pythian games were celebrated every fifth year, near
 Delphi, a small, but important city of Phocis, in Greece. The ex-
 ercises practised at these games, were, leaping, running, throwing,
 boxing, wrestling, and musical contentions. The victors were crown-
 ed with laurel. They were instituted in honour of Apollo. (Delphi
 is now called Castri.)

Thee, Python too, the wond'ring world to fright,
 And the new nations with so dire a sight :
 So monstrous was his bulk, so large a space
 Did his vast body and long train embrace ;
 Whom Phœbus,* basking on a bank, espied :
 Ere now the god his arrows had not tried,
 But on the trembling deer, or mountain goat ;
 At this new quarry he prepares to shoot.
 Though every shaft took place, he spent the store
 Of his full quiver ; and 'twas long before
 The expiring serpent wallow'd in his gore.
 Then, to preserve the fame of such a deed,
 For Python slain, he Pythian games decreed ;
 Where noble youths for mastership should strive,
 To quoit, to run, and steeds and chariots drive.
 The prize was fame : in witness of renown
 An oaken garland did the victor crown.
 The laurel was not yet for triumphs born,
 But every green, alike by Phœbus worn,
 Did, with promiscuous grace, his flowing locks adorn.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF DAPHNE INTO A LAUREL.

APOLLO† fell in love with the celebrated virgin Daphne, (a daughter of the river Peneus,) but she fled from him, and was transformed into the laurel, a shrub which is insensible to the violence of heat or cold, and always remains pure and verdant. A painter (it is said) attempted to draw the picture of Apollo upon a tablet of laurel wood, which would not suffer the colours to adhere ; as though the dead wood still retained the shrinking sensibility of the nymph.

* Phœbus, a name given to Apollo, as god of the Sun.

† Apollo was the son of Jupiter and Latona. He was the god of poetry, music, eloquence, and all the fine arts ; he also presided over medicine, augury, and archery. Among trees the laurel and the palm were sacred to him, and his oracles at Delphi and at Delos were in repute all over the world. He is represented as a handsome beardless youth, with long hair, crowned with laurel, holding in his right hand a bow and arrows, and in his left a lyre or harp. His head is usually surrounded with rays of light. Apollo is sometimes distinguished by the name of Phœbus ; he is then considered as the god of the Sun.

The first and fairest of his loves was she
Whom not blind Fortune, but the dire decree
Of angry Cupid* forced him to admire ;
Daphne her name, and Peneus† was her sire.
Swell'd with the pride that new success attends,
He sees the stripling, while his bow he bends,
And thus insults him : " Thou mischievous boy,
Are arms like these for children to employ ?
Know, such achievements are my proper claim,
Due to my vigour and unerring aim ;
Resistless are my shafts, and Python late,
In such a feather'd death has found his fate.

To whom the son of Venus thus replied :
" Phœbus, thy shafts are sure on all beside,
But mine on Phœbus ; mine the fame shall be
Of all thy conquests, when I conquer thee."

He said, and soaring, swiftly wing'd his flight,
Nor stopp'd, but on Parnassus‡ airy height.
Two different shafts he from his quiver draws,
One to repel desire, and one to cause.
One shaft is pointed with refulgent gold,
To bribe the love, and make the lover bold ;
One blunt, and tipp'd with lead, whose base allay
Provokes disdain, and drives desire away.
The blunted bolt against the nymph he dress'd,
But with the sharp transfix'd Apollo's breast.

The enamour'd deity pursues the deer ;
The beauteous damsel shuns his sight with fear ;
In hunting beasts of prey her youth employs,
And Phœbe§ rivals in her rural joys.
With naked neck she goes, and shoulders bare,
And with a fillet binds her flowing hair.
By many lovers sought, she mocks their pains,
Nor listens to the suit which she disdains.
The god of light, with flattering fancies fed,
Hopes what he seeks, by ardent love misled.
Her well turn'd neck he view'd (her neck was bare,)

* Cupid, the god of love. He was the son of Venus, and is generally represented as a winged infant, naked, and armed with a bow and quiver full of arrows.

† Peneus, a river of Thessaly, rising on Mount Pindus.

‡ Parnassus, a mountain of Phocis, in Greece.

§ Phœbe, a name sometimes applied to Diana, the goddess of hunting.

And o'er her shoulders stream'd her waving hair :
 He view'd her eyes, like heavenly lamps that shone,
 He view'd her lips, too sweet to view alone.
 Swift as the wind the damsel fled away,
 Nor did for his alluring speeches stay.
 "Stay nymph," he cried, "I follow, not a foe.
 Thus from the lion trips the trembling doe ;
 Thus from the wolf the frightened lamb removes,
 And from pursuing falcons fearful doves ;
 Thou shunn'st a god, and shunn'st a god that loves.
 Oh, lest some thorn should pierce thy tender foot,
 Or thou should'st fall in flying my pursuit,
 To sharp uneven ways thy steps decline ;
 Abate thy speed, and I'll abate of mine.
 Yet think from whom thou dost so rashly fly ;
 Nor basely born nor shepherd's swain am I.
 Perhaps thou know'st not my superiour state,
 And from that ignorance proceeds thy hate.
 Me Claros,* Delphi,† Tenedos,‡ obey ;
 These hands the Patareian§ sceptre sway :
 The king of gods my sire ; whate'er shall be,
 Or is, or ever was, in fate, I see.
 Mine is the invention of the charming lyre :
 Sweet notes, and heavenly numbers, I inspire :
 Sure is my bow, unerring is my dart ;
 But ah ! more deadly his who pierced my heart.
 Med'cine is mine ; what herbs and simples grow
 In fields and forests, all their powers I know,
 And am the great physician call'd below.
 Alas ! that fields and forests can afford
 No remedies to heal their love-sick lord :
 To cure the pains of love no plant avails ;
 And his own physic the physician fails."

* Claros, a city of Ionia, in Asia Minor, famous for its temple, grove, and oracle of Apollo.

† Delphi, a city of Phocis, in Greece, on the southern side of Mount Parnassus. It was celebrated for its Oracle in honour of Apollo, who inspired a priestess called Pythia with prophetic answers. The Pythian games, instituted by Apollo, were also celebrated near this place. The present village of Castri stands on part of the site of the ruins of Delphi.

‡ Tenedos, a small island in the Ægean Sea, opposite Troy.

§ Patareian Sceptre. Patara a city of Lycia, (Asia Minor,) where Apollo was held in high veneration, and where it is said he spent the six winter months.

She hears not half, so rapidly she flies ;
And on her ear the imperfect accent dies.
Fear gave her wings ; and as she fled, the wind
Increasing, spread her flowing hair behind.
She, urged by fear, her feet did swiftly move,
But he more swiftly, who was urged by love.

The nymph grew pale, and, in a mortal fright,
Spent with the labour of so long a flight,
And now despairing, cast a mournful look
Upon the streams of her paternal brook :
“ O help,” she cried, “ in this extremest need !
If water-gods are deities indeed ;
Gape earth, and this unhappy wretch entomb ;
Or change my form, whence all my sorrows come.”
Scarce had she finish’d, when her feet she found
Benumb’d with cold, and fasten’d to the ground ;
A filmy rind about her body grows ;
Her hair to leaves, her arms extend to boughs :
The nymph is all into a laurel gone ;
The smoothness of her skin remains alone.
Yet Phœbus loves her still, and casting round
Her bole his arms, some little warmth he found.
The tree still panted in the unfinish’d part,
Not wholly vegetive, and heaved her heart.
He fixed his lips upon the trembling rind ;
It swerved aside, and his embrace declin’d ;
To whom the god : “ Because thou canst not be
My mistress, I espouse thee for my tree :
Be thou the prize of honour and renown ;
The deathless poet, and the poem crown :
Thou shalt the Roman festivals adorn,
And after poets, be by victors worn :
Thou shalt returning Cæsar’s* triumph grace,
When poms shall in a long procession pass ;
Wreath’d on the post before his palace wait,
And be the sacred guardian of the gate :
Secure from thunder, and unharm’d by Jove ;†

* “Cæsar’s triumph grace.” It will be recollected that Ovid flourished in the reign of Augustus, to whom this flattery is addressed. Before his elevation to the throne, Augustus was named Octavius Cæsar. When honours of all kinds were conferred upon him by the Senate, among others, a laurel was ordered to be planted at his gate.

† “Secure from thunder, and unharmed by Jove.” The laurel,

Unfading as the Immortal powers above ;
 And as the locks of Phœbus are unshorn,
 So shall perpetual green thy boughs adorn."

The grateful tree was pleased with what he said,
 And shook the shady honours of her head.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF IÖ INTO A HEIFER.

JUPITER* having fallen in love with Iö, the daughter of Inachus, transformed her into a heifer in order to elude the jealous vigilance of his queen Juno.† The goddess, suspecting the fraud, obtained the animal from her husband, and committed her to the custody of the hundred-eyed Argus, by whom she was watched with the most unremitting vigilance. Mercury, at the command of Jupiter at length destroyed Argus, whose eyes were placed by Juno on the tail of the peacock, a bird sacred to her divinity. Iö, still persecuted in various ways by Juno, wandered over the greater part of the earth, until she at length arrived on the banks of the Nile. There, exhausted by fatigue and suffering, she implored Jupiter, either to restore her to her original form, or to terminate her misfortunes by death. Juno, touched

among the ancients was considered as a preservative against lightning, and the emperor Tiberius never failed to wear a wreath of it when the sky threatened a thunder storm. Byron thus speaks of it:

"The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust
 The iron crown of laurel's mimick'd leaves;
 Nor was the ominous element unjust,
 For the true laurel-wreath which glory weaves
 Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves."

* Jupiter was the son of Saturn and Ops, (also called Rhea, Cybele, &c.) Having dethroned his father Saturn, he took possession of the empire of the Universe, which he divided with his brothers, giving to Neptune the empire of the Sea, that of the Infernal Regions to Pluto, and reserving to himself the kingdom of Heaven. Jupiter is represented sitting upon a throne of gold or ivory, holding in one hand thunderbolts just ready to be hurled, and in the other a sceptre of cypress. His looks express majesty, and an eagle stands with expanded wings at his feet.

† Juno, the daughter of Saturn and Ops, was the wife of Jupiter. The ancients held her in great veneration, as she was the goddess of all power and empire, and the patroness of riches. She is generally represented sitting on a throne, richly dressed, with a diadem on her head, and a golden sceptre in her right hand. Sometimes she is represented standing in a light Car drawn by peacocks, attended by air-nymphs, and by Iris, the goddess of the rainbow.

with compassion, allowed Jupiter to grant her request, and Iô immediately resumed her former appearance. She married Osiris, king of Egypt, and after death was worshipped by her subjects as a Divinity under the name of Isis.

Inachus,* in his cave, alone,
Weeps not anothers' losses, but his own ;
For his dear Iô, whether stray'd or dead
To him uncertain, doubtful tears he shed.
He sought her through the world, but sought in vain,
And nowhere finding, rather fear'd her slain.

Her, just returning from her father's brook,
Jove had beheld, with an admiring look :
" And, O fair daughter of the flood," he said,
" Worthy alone imperial Jove to wed ;
" Happy whoever shall those charms possess ;
The king of gods (nor is thy lover less)
Invites thee to you cooler shades, to shun
The scorching rays of the meridian sun :
Nor shalt thou tempt the dangers of the grove
Alone, without a guide ; thy guide is Jove :
No puny power, but he whose high command
Is unconfined, who rules the seas and land,
And tempers thunder in his awful hand."

Meantime the jealous Juno, from on high,
Survey'd the fruitful fields of Arcady ;
Then round the skies she sought for Jupiter,
Her faithless husband ; but no Jove was there.
With fury she precipitates her flight ;
Dispels the shadows of dissembled night,
And to the day restores his native light.

Jove, careful to prevent
The consequence, foreseeing her descent,
Transforms the maid in haste ; and now
In Iô's place appears a gentle cow :
So smooth her skin, so faultless was her make,
Ev'n Juno did unwilling pleasure take
To see so fair a rival of her love ;
And what she was, and whence, enquired of Jove ;
Of what fair herd, and from what pedigree ?
Jove said she sprang from earth ; she took the word,

* Inachus, the father of Iô, gave his name to a river of Argos, of which he became the tutelar deity.

And begg'd the beauteous heifer of her lord.
 What should he do ? 'Twas equal shame to Jove
 Or to relinquish or betray his love ;
 Yet to refuse so slight a gift would be
 But more to increase his consort's jealousy :
 Thus fear and love, by turns, his heart assail'd ;
 And stronger love had sure, at length, prevail'd ;
 But some faint hope remain'd, his jealous queen
 Had not the maiden through the heifer seen.
 The cautious goddess, of her gift possess'd,
 Yet harbour'd anxious thoughts within her breast ;
 As she who knew the falsehood of her Jove,
 And justly fear'd some new relapse of love ;
 Which to prevent, and to secure her care,
 To trusty Argus she commits the fair.

The head of Argus (as with stars the skies)
 Was compass'd round and wore a hundred eyes :
 But two by turns their lids in slumber steep ;
 The rest on duty still their station keep ;
 Nor could the total constellation sleep.
 Thus, ever present to his eyes and mind,
 His charge was still before him, though behind.
 In fields he suffer'd her to feed by day ;
 But when the setting sun to night gave way,
 The captive cow he summon'd with a call,
 And drove her back, and tied her to the stall.
 On leaves of trees and bitter herbs she fed :
 Heaven was her canopy ; bare earth her bed :
 So hardly lodged :—and to digest her food,
 She drank from troubled streams, defiled with mud.
 Her woful story fain she would have told,
 With hands upheld ; but had no hands to hold.
 Her head to her ungentle keeper bow'd
 She strove to speak ; she spoke not, but she low'd.
 Affrighted with the noise, she look'd around,
 And seem'd to inquire the author of the sound.

Once on the banks where often she had play'd
 (Her father's banks) she came, and there survey'd
 Her alter'd visage, and her branching head ;
 And, starting, from herself she would have fled.
 Her fellow-nymphs, familiar to her eyes,
 Beheld, but knew her not in this disguise ;
 Ev'n Inachus himself was ignorant,
 And in his daughter did his daughter want.

She follow'd where her fellows went, as she
 Were still a partner of the company :
 They stroke her neck ; the gentle heifer stands,
 And her neck offers to their stroking hands.
 Her father gave her grass ; the grass she took,
 And lick'd his palms, and cast a piteous look,
 And in the language of her eyes she spoke.
 She would have told her name, and ask'd relief,
 But wanting words, in tears she tells her grief ;
 Which, with her foot she makes him understand ;
 And prints the name of Iô in the sand.

" Ah wretched me !" her mournful father cried ;

" She with a sigh to wretched me replied."

About her milk-white neck his arms he threw,
 And wept ; and then these tender words ensue ;
 " And art thou she whom I have sought around
 The world, and have at length so sadly found ?
 So found, is worse than lost : with mutual words
 Thou answerest not ; no voice thy tongue affords ;
 But sighs are deeply drawn from out thy breast ;
 And speech denied by lowing is express'd.
 O, were I mortal, death might bring relief ;
 But now my godhead but extends my grief ;
 Prolongs my woes, of which no end I see,
 And makes me curse my immortality !"
 More had he said, but fearful of her stay,
 The starry guardian drove his charge away
 To some fresh pasture ; on a hilly height
 He sat himself, and kept her still in sight.

Now Jove no longer could her sufferings bear,
 But call'd in haste his airy messenger,
 The son of Maia,* with severe decree,
 To kill the keeper, and to set her free.
 With all his harness soon the god was sped,
 His flying hat was fastened on his head ;

* Mercury, the son of Jupiter and Maia, was the messenger of the gods, and of Jupiter in particular. He possessed a winged cap called Petasus, and wings for his feet called Ialaria. With these he was enabled to go with the greatest celerity into whatever part of the universe he pleased. He was permitted to make himself invisible, and to assume any form he chose. He also possessed a wand, or rod, called Caduceus, with which he could lull to sleep whomsoever he wished.

Wings on his heels were hung, and in his hand
 He holds the virtue of the snaky wand.
 The liquid air his moving pinions wound,
 And, in the moment, shoot him on the ground.
 Before he came in sight, the crafty god
 His wings dismiss'd, but still retain'd his rod.
 That sleep-procuring wand wise Hermès* took,
 But made it seem to sight a shepherd's hook :
 With this he did a herd of goats control,
 Which by the way he met, and slyly stole :
 Clad like a country swain, he piped and sung,
 And, playing drove his jolly troop along.
 With pleasure Argus the musician heeds,
 But wonders much at those new vocal reeds.
 " And whosoe'er thou art, my friend " said he,
 " Up hither drive thy goats, and play by me ;
 This hill has browse for them and shade for thee."
 The god, who was with ease induced to climb,
 Began discourse, to pass away the time ;
 And still, betwixt, his tuneful pipe he plies,
 And watch'd his hour, to close the keeper's eyes.
 With much ado, he partly kept awake,
 Not suffering all his eyes repose to take :
 And ask'd the stranger who did reeds invent ;
 And whence began so rare an instrument ?

THE TRANSFORMATION OF SYRINX INTO REEDS.

SYRINX was a nymph of Arcadia,† (and daughter of the river Ladon,) of whom Pan‡ became enamoured ; he pursued her, but she fled from him, and when overtaken on the banks of a river, implored the aid of her sister nymphs, by

* Hermès, a name given to Mercury, by the Greeks.

† Arcadia, a country in the centre of the Peloponnesus, (now the Morea,) in Greece.

‡ Pan, was the god of shepherds, of huntsmen, and of all the inhabitants of the country. He was a monster in appearance, having two small horns on his head, a flat nose, and the legs and feet of a goat. He is represented holding in one hand a shepherd's crook, and in the other a pipe formed of unequal reeds; he is crowned with pine, that tree being sacred to him.

whom she was immediately changed to a number of reeds. These reeds being agitated by the wind, uttered mournful but musical sounds, which Pan perceiving, he cut down seven of which he formed his Syrinx or pastoral pipe.

Then Hermès thus : " A nymph of late there was,
Whose heavenly form her fellows did surpass ;
The pride and joy of fair Arcadia's plains ;
Beloved by deities, adored by swains ;
Syrinx her name ; by sylvans oft pursued,
As oft she did the admiring gods elude ;
The rural and the woodland powers disdain'd ;
With Cynthia* hunted, and her rites maintain'd :
Like Phœbe† clad, even Phœbe's self she seems,
So tall, so straight, such well proportion'd limbs :
The nicest eye did no distinction know,
But that the goddess bore a golden bow.
Descending from Lycæus,‡ Pan admires
The matchless nymph ; her charms his bosom fires :
A crown of pine upon his head he wore ;
And thus began her pity to implore :—
But ere he thus began, she took her flight,
So swift, she was already out of sight ;
Nor stay'd to hear the courtship of the god ;
But bent her course to Ladon's§ gentle flood ;
There by the river stopp'd, and, tired before,
Relief from water nymphs her prayers implore.
Now while the rural god, with speedy pace,
Just thought to fold her in a fond embrace,
He fills his arms with reeds, new rising on the place :
And while he sighs his ill success to find,
The tender canes were shaken by the wind,
And breathed a mournful air, unheard before,
That much astonished Pan, yet pleased him more.
Admiring this new music,—'Thou,' he said,
Ungrateful maid, who from my love hath fled,
At least shall be the consort of my mind,
And often, often to my lips be join'd."

* Cynthia, a name given to Diana, from Mount Cynthus, in the Island of Delos, where she was born.

† Phœbe, a name given to Diana.

‡ Lycæus, a mountain of Arcadia, in Greece, sacred to Pan.

§ Ladon, a river of Arcadia.

He form'd the reeds, proportion'd as they are
Unequal in their length, and wax'd with care :
They still retain the name of his lamented fair.

THE EYES OF ARGUS PLACED BY JUNO ON THE TAIL OF THE
PEACOCK.

WHILE Hermès piped, and sung, and told his tale,
The keeper's winking eyes began to fail,
And drowsy slumber on the lids to creep
Till all the watchman was at length asleep.
Then soon the god his song and voice suppress'd,
And with his powerful rod confirm'd his rest ;
Without delay his crooked falchion drew,
And at one fatal stroke the keeper slew.
Down from the rock fell the dissever'd head,
Opening its eyes in death, and falling, bled,
And mark'd the passage with a crimson trail :
Thus Argus lies a victim, cold and pale,
And all his hundred eyes, with all their light,
Are closed at once in one perpetual night.
These Juno takes, that they no more may fail,
And spreads them in her peacock's gaudy tail.

CONTINUATION OF THE STORY OF IO.

Now haughty Juno by revenge is led,
To wreak her anger on her rival's head ;
With Furies frights her from her native home,
And drives her frantic, round the world to roam ;
Nor ceas'd her madness, and her flight, before
She touch'd the limits of the Pharian shore.
At length, arriving on the banks of Nile,
Wearied with length of ways, and worn with toil,
She laid her down, and, leaning on her knees,
Invoked the cause of all her miseries,
And cast her languishing regards above,
For help from Heaven and her ungrateful Jove,

She sigh'd, she wept, she low'd ; 'twas all she could ;
 And with unkindness seem'd to tax the god ;
 Last, with an humble prayer, she begg'd repose,
 Or death at least, to finish all her woes.
 Jove heard her vows, and, with a flattering look,
 In her behalf to jealous Juno spoke.

The goddess was appeased ; and at the word
 Was Iō to her former shape restor'd :
 The rugged hair began to fall away ;
 The sweetness of her eyes did only stay,
 Though not so large : her crooked horns decrease ;
 The wideness of her jaws and nostrils cease ;
 Her hoofs to hands return, in little space ;
 The five long taper fingers take their place ;
 And nothing of the heifer now was seen,
 Beside the native whiteness of the skin.
 Erected on her feet she walks again ;
 And two the duty of the four sustain.
 She tries her tongue ; her silence softly breaks,
 And fears her former lowings when she speaks :
 A goddess now through all the Egyptian state,
 And served by priests, who in white linen wait.
 Her son was Epaphus, at length believed
 The son of Jove, and as a god received ;
 With sacrifice adored, and public prayers,
 He common temples with his mother shares.

STORY OF PHAËTON.

PHAËTON was the son of Phœbus* and Clymene. At the earnest solicitation of his mother, who was anxious that he should be publicly acknowledged by his father, he repaired to the palace of the Sun, where he was kindly received by the Deity, and who, to convince him of the strength of his paternal affection, desired him to make any request, which he swore by the Styx to grant. Phaëton petitioned to be allowed to drive, for one day, the chariot of the Sun. In vain did the god represent to him the danger, impropriety, and rashness of his request ; Phaëton persisted in his de-

* Phœbus, a name given to Apollo as god of the sun.

mand, and as the oath which Phœbus had sworn was inviolable, he was forced to comply. Phæton mounted the car, but soon betrayed his incapacity to guide the horses of the Sun ; they became restive, departed from their usual track, and heaven and earth were threatened with an universal conflagration, which Jupiter perceiving, he struck the unfortunate youth with a thunderbolt, and hurled him headlong from Heaven into the river Po. His body was found and buried by the nymphs of the place ; and his sisters, while lamenting his loss around his tomb, were changed by Jupiter into poplars.

The Sun's bright palace, on high columns raised,
 With burnish'd gold and flaming jewels blazed ;
 The folding gates diffused a silver light,
 And with a milder gleam refresh'd the sight ;
 Of polish'd ivory was the covering wrought.
 The matter vied not with the sculptor's thought ;
 For in the portal was display'd on high
 (The work of Vulcan*) a fictitious sky ;
 A waving sea the inferior earth embraced,
 And gods and goddesses the waters graced.
 Ægeon here a mighty whale bestrode ;
 Triton,† and Proteus‡ (the deceiving god,)
 With Doris§ here were carved, and all her train :
 Some loosely swimming in the figured main,
 While some on rocks their dropping hair divide,
 And some on fishes through the waters glide :
 Though various features did the sisters grace,
 A sister's likeness was in every face.
 On earth a different landscape courts the eyes :
 Men, towns, and beasts, in distant prospects rise,
 And nymphs, and streams, and woods, and rural deities.
 O'er all, the heaven's refulgent image shines :
 On either gate were six engraven signs.

* Vulcan was worshipped by the ancients as the god of fire, and as the patron of all artists who worked in iron and metals. He is represented as a deformed man, covered with sweat and smoke, holding in one hand an uplifted hammer, and in the other he turns with a pincers a thunderbolt, for which an eagle waits by his side to carry to Jupiter.

† Triton, a powerful sea-deity.

‡ Proteus, a sea-deity who had the power of assuming various forms.

§ Doris, a sea-goddess.

Here Phaëton, still gaining on the ascent,
To his immortal father's palace went,
Till, pressing forward through the bright abode,
He saw at distance the illustrious god ;
He saw at distance, or the dazzling light
Had flash'd too strongly on his aching sight.

The god sits high, exalted on a throne
Of blazing gems, with purple garments on :
The Hours in order ranged on either hand,
And Days, and Years, and Months, and Ages stand.
Here Spring appears, with flowery chaplets bound ;
Here Summer, in her wheaten garlands crown'd ;
Here Autumn the rich trodden grapes besmear,
And hoary Winter shivers in the rear.

Phœbus beheld the youth from off his throne ;
That eye which looks on all was fixed on one :
He saw the boy's confusion in his face,
Surprised at all the wonders of the place,
And cries aloud, " What wants my son ! for know
My son thou art, and I must call thee so."

" Light of the world," the trembling youth replies,
" Illustrious parent ! since you don't despise
The parent's name, some certain token give,
That I may Clymene's proud boast believe,
Nor longer under false reproaches grieve."

The tender sire was touch'd with what he said,
And flung the blaze of glories from his head,
And bade the youth advance. " My son," said he,
" Come to thy father's arms ! for Clymene
Has told thee true : a parent's name I own,
And deem thee worthy to be call'd my son.
As a sure proof, make some request, and I,
Whate'er it be, with that request comply :
By Styx* I swear, whose waves are hid in night,
And roll impervious to my piercing sight."

The youth, transported, asks, without delay,
To guide the Sun's bright chariot for a day.

The god repented of the oath he took ;
For anguish thrice his radiant head he shook.

* Styx, a celebrated river of Hell. The gods held the waters of the Styx in such veneration, that they always swore by them ; an oath which was inviolable.

"My son," said he, "some other proof require ;
 Rash was my promise, rash is thy desire.
 I'd fain deny this wish which thou hast made,
 Or, what I can't deny, would fain dissuade.
 Too vast and hazardous the task appears,
 Nor suited to thy strength, nor to thy years.
 Thy lot is mortal, but thy wishes fly
 Beyond the province of mortality.
 There is not one of all the gods that dares
 (However skill'd in other great affairs)
 To mount the burning axle-tree but I ;
 Not Jove himself, the ruler of the sky,
 That hurls the three-fork'd thunder from above,
 Dares try his strength : yet who so strong as Jove ?
 The steeds climb up the first ascent with pain,
 And when the middle firmament they gain,
 If downward from the heavens my head I bow,
 And see the earth and ocean hang below,
 Ev'n I am seized with horror and affright,
 And my own heart misgives me at the sight.
 A mighty downfall steeps the evening stage ;
 And steady reins must curb the horses' rage :
 Tethys* herself has fear'd to see me driven
 Down headlong from the precipice of heaven.
 Besides, consider what impetuous force
 Turns stars and planets in a different course :
 I steer against their motions ; nor am I
 Borne back by all the current of the sky.
 But how could you resist the orbs that roll
 In adverse whirls, and stem the rapid pole ?
 But you, perhaps, may hope for pleasing woods,
 And stately domes, and cities fill'd with gods ;
 While through a thousand snares your progress lies,
 Where forms of starry monsters stock the skies :
 For should you hit the doubtful way aright,
 The bull† with stooping horns, stands opposite ;
 Next him, the bright Hæmonian‡ bow is strung ;
 And next, the lion's§ grinning visage hung :
 The scorpion's|| claws here clasp a wide extent ;

* Tethys, the greatest of the sea-deities, and wife of Oceanus.

† The bull, (Taurus,) one of the signs of the Zodiac.

‡ Hæmonian bow, one of the constellations.

§ The lion, (Leo,) a constellation of the Zodiac.

|| The scorpion, (Scorpio,) a constellation of the Zodiac.

And here the crab's* in lesser clasps are bent.
 Nor would you find it easy to compose
 The mettled steeds when from their nostrils flows
 The scorching fire that in their entrails glows,
 Ev'n I their headstrong fury scarce restrain,
 When they grow warm and restive to the rein.
 Let not my son a fatal gift require ;
 But, O ! in time recall your rash desire :
 You ask a gift that may your parent tell ;
 Let these my fears your parentage reveal,
 And learn a father from a father's care :
 Look on my face : or if my heart lay bare,
 Could you but look, you'd read the father there.
 Choose out a gift, from seas, or earth, or skies ;
 For open to your wish all nature lies,
 Only decline this one unequal task,
 For 'tis a mischief, not a gift you ask.
 You ask a real mischief, Phaëton :
 Nay, hang not thus about my neck, my son.
 I grant your wish, and Styx has heard my voice ;
 Choose what you will, but make a wiser choice."
 Thus did the god the unwary youth advise ;
 But he still longs to travel through the skies ;
 When the fond father (for in vain he pleads)
 At length to the Vulcanian chariot leads.
 A golden axle did the work uphold,
 Gold was the beam, the wheels were orb'd with gold ;
 The spokes in rows of silver pleased the sight ;
 The seat with parti-coloured gems was bright :
 Apollo shone amid the glare of light.
 The youth with secret joy the work surveys,
 When now the moon disclosed her purple rays :
 The stars were fled, for Lucifer† had chased
 The stars away, and fled himself at last.
 Soon as the father saw the rosy morn,
 And the moon shining with a blunter horn,
 He bid the nimble Hours, without delay,
 Bring forth the steeds ; the nimble Hours obey.

* The crab, (Cancer,) a constellation of the Zodiac.

† Lucifer, a name applied to the planet Venus. When it rises before the sun in the morning, it is called Lucifer, Phosphorus, or the morning star ; when it sets after the sun in the evening, it is denominated Hesperus or Vesper, or the evening star.

From their full racks the generous steeds retire,
 Dropping ambrosial foams, and snorting fire.
 Still anxious for his son, the god of day,
 To make him proof against the burning ray,
 His temples with celestial ointment wet,
 Of sovereign virtue, to repel the heat ;
 Then fix'd the beamy circle on his head,
 And drew a deep foreboding sigh, and said :
 " Take this at least, this last advice, my son :
 Keep a stiff rein, and move but gently on :
 The coursers of themselves will run too fast ;
 Your art must be to moderate their haste.
 Drive them not on directly through the skies,
 But where the Zodiac's winding circle lies,
 Along the midmost Zone ; but sally forth
 Nor to the distant south, nor stormy north.
 The horses' hoofs a beaten track will show ;
 But neither mount too high, nor sink too low.
 That no new fires or heaven or earth infest,
 Keep the mid-way : the middle way is best :
 Nor where, in radiant folds, the serpent* twines,
 Direct your course ; nor where the altar† shines :
 Shun both extremes ; the rest let fortune guide,
 And better for thee than thyself provide !
 See, while I speak, the shades disperse away,
 Aurora‡ gives the promise of a day ;
 I'm call'd, nor can I make a longer stay.
 Snatch up the reins, or still the attempt forsake,
 And not my chariot, but my counsel take,
 While yet securely on the earth you stand,
 Nor touch the horses with too rash a hand.
 Let me alone to light the world, while you
 Enjoy those beams which you may safely view."
 He spoke in vain ; the youth, with active heat
 And sprightly vigour, vaults into the seat,
 And joys to hold the reins, and fondly gives
 Those thanks his father with remorse receives.

* Serpent, a northern constellation.

† Altar, a southern constellation.

‡ Aurora, the goddess of the morning ; she is generally represented in a chariot drawn by white horses, and covered with a veil ; opening with her rosy fingers the gates of the east, pouring dew upon the earth, and causing flowers to spring up. She always sets out before the sun, and is the fore-runner of his rising.

Meanwhile the restless horses neigh'd aloud,
 Breathing out fire, and pawing where they stood.
 Tethys, not knowing what had pass'd, gave way,
 And all the waste of heaven before them lay.
 They spring together out, and swiftly bear
 The flying youth through clouds and yielding air ;
 With wingy speed outstrip the eastern wind,
 And leave the breezes of the morn behind.
 The youth was light, nor could he fill the seat,
 Or poise the chariot with its wonted weight :
 But as at sea the unballast'd vessel rides,
 Cast to and fro, the sport of winds and tides,
 So in the bounding chariot, toss'd on high,
 The youth is hurried headlong through the sky.
 Soon as the steeds perceive it, they forsake
 Their stated course, and leave the beaten track.
 The youth was in amaze, nor did he know
 Which way to turn the reins, or where to go :
 Nor would the horses, had he known, obey.
 Then the seven stars first felt Apollo's ray,
 And wish'd to dip in the forbidden sea.
 The folded serpent,* next the frozen pole,
 Stiff and benumb'd before, began to roll,
 And raged with inward heat, and threaten'd war,
 And shot a redder light from every star ;
 Nay, and 'tis said, Boötes,† too, that fain
 Thou wouldst have fled, though cumber'd with thy wain.

The unhappy youth, then bending down his head,
 Saw earth and ocean far beneath him spread.
 His colour changed, he started at the sight,
 And his eyes darken'd by too great a light.
 Now could he wish the fiery steeds untried,
 His birth obscure, and his request denied :

So fares the pilot, when his ship is toss'd
 In troubled seas, and all its steerage lost ;
 He gives her to the winds, and, in despair,
 Seeks his last refuge in the gods and prayer.

What could he do ? his eyes, if backward cast,
 Find a long path he had already pass'd ;
 If forward, still a longer path they find ;

* Folded serpent, a northern constellation.

† Boötes, a northern constellation, near the tail of the Great Bear.
 It is sometimes called the driver or wagoner.

Both he compares, and measures in his mind ;
 And sometimes casts an eye upon the east,
 And sometimes looks on the forbidden west.
 The horses' names he knew not in the fright ;
 Nor would he loose the reins ; nor could he hold them tight.

Now all the horrors of the heavens he spies,
 And monstrous shadows of prodigious size,
 That, deck'd with stars, lie scatter'd o'er the skies.
 There is a place above, where Scorpio* bent
 In tail and arms surrounds a vast extent ;
 In a wide circuit of the heavens he shines,
 And fills the space of two celestial signs.
 Soon as the youth beheld him, vex'd with heat
 Brandish his sting, and in his poison sweat,
 Half dead with sudden fear, he dropp'd the reins ;
 The horses felt them loose upon their manes,
 And, flying out through all the plains above,
 Ran, uncontroll'd, where'er their fury drove ;
 Rush'd on the stars, and, through a pathless way
 Of unknown regions, hurried on the day.
 And now above and now below they flew,
 And near the earth the burning chariot drew.

The clouds disperse in fumes, the wond'ring moon
 Beholds her brother's steeds beneath her own ;
 The high lands smoke, cleft by the piercing rays,
 Or, clad with woods, in their own fuel blaze.
 Next o'er the plains, where ripen'd harvests grow,
 The running conflagration spreads below.
 But these are trivial ills : whole cities burn,
 And peopled kingdoms into ashes turn.

The mountains kindle as the car draws near ;
 Athos and Tmolus red with fires appear ;
 Œagrian Hæmus (then a single name)
 And virgin Helicon increase the flame :
 Taurus and Æte glare amid the sky ;
 And Ida, spite of all her fountains, dry :
 Eryx, and Othrys, and Cithæron, glow ;
 And Rhodope, no longer clothed in snow ;
 High Pindus, Mimas, and Parnassus, sweat ;
 And Ætna rages with redoubled heat :
 Ev'n Scythia, through her hoary regions warm'd,
 In vain with all her native frost was arm'd ;

* Scorpio, one of the constellations.

Cover'd with flames, the towering Appenine,
And Caucasus, and proud Olympus, shine ;
And where the long extended Alps aspire,
Now stands a huge continued range of fire.

The astonished youth, where'er his eyes could turn,
Beheld the universe around him burn :
The world was in a blaze ; nor could he bear
The sultry vapours and the scorching air,
Which from below, as from a furnace, flow'd :
And now the axle tree beneath him glow'd.
Lost in the whirling clouds that round him broke,
And white with ashes, hovering in the smoke,
He flew where'er the horses drove, nor knew
Whither the horses drove, or where he flew.

'Twas then, they say, the swarthy Moor begun
To change his hue, and blacken in the sun ;
Then Lybia first, of all her moisture drain'd,
Became a barren waste, a wild of sand ;
The water-nymphs lament their empty urns ;
Bœotia, robb'd of silver Dirce, mourns ;
Corinth, Pyrene's wasted spring bewails ;
And Argos grieves while Amynone fails.

The floods are drain'd from every distant coast ;
Ev'n Tanais, though fixed in ice, was lost :
Enraged Caicus and Lycormas roar,
And Xanthus, fated to be burnt once more :
The fam'd Mæander, that unwearied strays
Through many windings, smokes in every maze :
From his loved Babylon Euphrates flies ;
The big-swoln Ganges and the Danube rise
In thick'ning fumes, and darken half the skies :
In flames Ismenos and the Phasis roll'd,
And Tagus, floating in his melted gold :
The swans, that on Cayster often tried
Their tuneful songs, now sung their last, and died :
The frighted Nile ran off, and under ground
Conceal'd his head, nor can it yet be found ;
His seven divided currents all are dry,
And, where they roll'd, seven gaping trenches lie :
No more the Rhine or Rhone their course maintain,
Nor Tiber, of his promis'd empire vain.

The ground deep cleft admits the dazzling ray,

And startles Pluto* with the flash of day :
 The seas shrink in, and to the sight disclose
 Wide naked plains, where once their billows rose ;
 Their rocks are all discover'd, and increase
 The number of the scatter'd Cyclades : †
 The fish in shoals about the bottom creep ;
 Nor longer dares the crooked dolphin leap :
 Nereus, ‡ and Doris, § with her virgin train,
 Seek out the last recesses of the main :
 Beneath unfathomable depths they faint,
 And secret in their gloomy caverns pant :
 Stern Neptune thrice above the waves upheld
 His face, and thrice was by the flames repell'd.
 The Earth at length, on every side embraced
 With scalding seas, that floated round her waist,
 Uplifted to the heavens her blasted head,
 And press'd her hand upon her brows, and said :
 (But first, impatient of the sultry heat,
 Sunk deeper down, and sought a cooler seat) :
 " If you, great king of gods, my death approve,
 And I deserve it, let me die by Jove :
 If I must perish by the force of fire,
 Let me transfix'd with thunderbolts expire.
 See, while I speak, my breath the vapours choke
 (For now her face lay wrapp'd in clouds of smoke,)
 See my singed hair, behold my faded eye,
 And wither'd face, where heaps of cinders lie !
 And does the plough for this my body tear ?
 This the reward for all the fruits I bear,
 Tortur'd with rakes, and harass'd all the year ?
 That herbs for cattle daily I renew,
 And food for man, and frankincense for you ?
 But, grant me guilty, what has Neptune done ?
 Why are his waters boiling in the sun ?
 The wavy empire, which by lot was given,
 Why does it waste, and farther shrink from heaven ?
 If I, nor he, your pity can provoke,
 See your own heavens, the heavens begin to smoke !

* Pluto, the god of the Infernal regions.

† Cyclades, a name applied by the ancient Greeks to that cluster of islands which surrounds Delos, in the Ægean Sea.

‡ Nereus, a sea-deity.

§ Doris, a goddess of the sea.

Should once the sparkles catch those bright abodes,
Destruction seizes on the heavens and gods;
Atlas* becomes unequal to his freight,
And almost faints beneath the glowing weight.
If heaven, and earth, and sea, together burn,
All must again into their chaos turn.
Apply some speedy cure, prevent our fate,
And succour Nature ere it be too late."

She ceased, for choked with vapours round her spread,
Down to the deepest shades she sunk her head.

Jove call'd to witness every power above,
And even the god whose son the chariot drove,
That what he acts he is compell'd to do,
Or universal ruin must ensue.
Straight he ascends the high ethereal throne,
From whence he used to dart his thunder down,
From whence his showers and storms he used to pour,
But now could meet with neither storm nor shower :
Then, aiming at the youth, with lifted hand,
Full at his head he hurled the forky brand
In dreadful thunderings. Thus the almighty sire
Suppress'd the raging of the fires with fire.

At once from life and from the chariot driven,
The ambitious boy fell thunder-struck from heaven ;
The horses started with a sudden bound,
And flung the reins and chariot to the ground :
The studded harness from their necks they broke,
Here fell a wheel, and there a silver spoke ;
Here were the beam and axle torn away,
And scatter'd o'er the earth the shining fragments lay.
The breathless Phaëton, with flaming hair,
Shot from the chariot like a falling star,
That in a summer's evening from the top
Of heaven drops down, or seems at least to drop,
Till on the Po† his blasted corse was hurl'd,
Far from his country, in the western world.

The Latian nymphs came round him, and amazed,
On the dead youth, transfix'd with thunder, gazed,
And, while yet smoking from the bolt he lay,

* Atlas, a lofty mountain of Africa, on whose summit the ancients imagined that the heavens rested. Atlas (say the poets) was a giant who was transformed to this mountain.

† Po, a river of Italy,

His shatter'd body to a tomb convey;
 And o'er the tomb this epitaph devise:
 "Here he who drove the sun's bright chariot lies;
 His father's fiery steeds he could not guide,
 But in the glorious enterprize he died."

Apollo hid his face, and pined for grief,
 And if the story may deserve belief,
 The space of one whole day is said to run,
 From morn to wonted eve, without a sun;
 The burning ruins, with a fainter ray,
 Supply the sun, and counterfeit a day,
 A day that still did Nature's face disclose,
 This comfort from the mighty mischief rose.

PHAETON'S SISTERS TRANSFORMED INTO TREES.

But Clymenè, enraged with grief, laments,
 And as her grief inspires, her passion vents;
 Wild for her son, and frantic in her woes,
 With hair dishevell'd, round the world she goes
 To seek where'er his body might be cast,
 Till, on the borders of the Po, at last
 The name inscribed on the new tomb appears;
 The dear, dear name, she bathes in flowing tears,
 Hangs o'er the tomb, unable to depart,
 And hugs the marble to her throbbing heart.

Her daughters too lament, and sigh, and mourn,
 (A fruitless tribute to their brother's urn)
 And beat their naked bosoms, and complain,
 And call aloud for Phaëton, in vain;
 All the long night their mournful watch they keep,
 And all the day stand round the tomb and weep.

Four times, revolving, the full moon return'd,
 So long the mother and the daughters mourn'd,
 When now the eldest, Phaethusa, strove
 To rest her weary limbs, but could not move;
 Lampetia would have helped her, but she found
 Herself withheld and rooted to the ground;
 A third, in wild affliction as she grieves,
 Would rend her hair, but fills her hands with leaves:
 And now their limbs, and arms, and bodies, stood
 Crusted with bark, and harden'd into wood;

But still above were female heads display'd,
And lips, that call'd the mother to their aid.
What could, alas! the frighted mother do?
From this to that with eager haste she flew,
And kiss'd her weeping daughters as they grew;
She tears the bark that to each body cleaves;
And from their verdant fingers strips the leaves;
The blood came trickling where she tore away
The leaves and bark. The maids were heard to say,
"Forbear, mistaken parent, O forbear!
A wounded daughter in each tree you tear;
Farewell for ever." Here the bark increased,
Closed on their faces, and their words suppress'd.

The new made trees in tears of amber run,
Which, harden'd into value by the sun,
Distil for ever on the stream below;
The limpid stream their radiant treasure show
Mix'd in the sand, whence the rich drops convey'd,
Shine in the dress of the bright Latian maid.

Meanwhile Apollo, in the gloomy shade,
(The native lustre of his brows decay'd)
Indulging sorrow, sickens at the sight
Of his own sunshine, and abhors the light.
The hidden griefs that in his bosom rise,
Sadden his looks and overcast his eyes,
As when some dusky orb obstructs his ray,
And sullies, in a dim eclipse, the day.

Now secretly with inward griefs he pined,
Now warm resentments to his grief he join'd,
And now renounced his office to mankind.
"E'er since the birth of time," said he, "I've borne
A long ungrateful toil without return;
Let now some other manage, if he dare,
The fiery steeds, and mount the burning car;
Or, if none else, let Jove his fortune try,
And learn to lay his murd'ring thunder by;
Then, will he own, perhaps, but own too late,
My son deserv'd not so severe a fate."
The gods stand round him, as he mourns, and pray
He would resume the conduct of the day,
Nor let the world be lost in endless night;
Jove too, himself descending from his height,
Excus'd what had happen'd, and entreats,
Majestically mixing prayers and threats.

42 TRANSFORMATION OF CLYTIE INTO A SUNFLOWER.

Prevail'd upon at length, again he took
The harness'd steeds, that still with horror shook,
And plies them with the lash, and whips them on,
And, as he whips, upbraids them with his son.

THE STORY OF LEUCOTHOE.

LEUCOTHOE, a beautiful maiden, was beloved by Apollo; but meeting with a cruel and untimely death, the disconsolate deity sprinkled nectar and ambrosia upon her tomb, from whence sprang a tree bearing frankincense. (The following is a description of her transformation.)

What Phœbus could do for the nymph was done;
Full on her grave with pointed beams he shone;
The vital flame he strove to light again,
And warm the frozen blood in every vein;
But since resistless fates denied that power,
On the cold nymph he rain'd a nectar shower.
"Ah! undeserving thus," he said, "to die,
Yet still in odours thou shalt reach the sky."
The body soon dissolved, and all around
Perfumed with heavenly fragrances the ground.
A sacrifice for gods uprose from thence,
A sweet delightful tree of frankincense.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF CLYTIE INTO A SUNFLOWER.

CLYTIE was enamoured of Apollo, but unable to touch the heart of the deity, she pined away with grief, and was changed into a Heliotrope, (or Sunflower,) which still turned its head towards the sun, in token of her love.

Now scornful Phœbus from fair Clytie flies,
Nor listens to the maiden's mournful sighs;
All day, all night, in trackless wilds alone
She pined, and taught the listening rocks her moan.
On the cold earth she lies, her bosom bare,
Loose her attire, dishevell'd is her hair.

Nine times the morn unbarr'd the gates of light,
 As oft were spread the alternate shades of night;
 So long no sustenance the mourner knew,
 Unless she drank her tears or pearly dew.
 She turn'd about, but rose not from the ground,
 Turn'd to the sun still as he roll'd his round;
 On his bright face hung her desiring eyes,
 Till, fix'd to earth, she strove in vain to rise;
 Her looks their paleness in a flower retain'd,
 But here and there some purple streaks they gain'd.
 Still the loved object the fond leaves pursue,
 Still move their root the moving sun to view,
 And in the Heliotrope the nymph is true.

THE STORY OF EUROPA.

JUPITER being enamoured of Europa, the daughter of Agenor, king of Phœnicia, assumed the form of a bull, and mingling with her father's herds, gently approached the lovely maiden, while with her young companions she was gathering flowers in the meadows. Europa, delighted with the beautiful appearance of the milk-white animal, awhile caressed him, binding his horns and brow with flowery garlands, and then sportively springing upon his back, was immediately borne off in triumph by the god. Plunging into the sea, he swam with her to the island of Crete, where resuming his own form, he declared his love. Europa was the mother of Minos, the celebrated king of Crete, and of Rhadamanthus; both of whom were after death made judges of the souls in the infernal regions. (The bull into which Jupiter transformed himself, was afterwards placed in the heavens as a constellation, known by the name of Taurus.)

Now Hermès* enters the sublime abodes,
 And, as he mix'd among the crowd of gods,
 Jove call'd him out, and drew him from the rest,
 And in soft whispers, thus his will express'd:
 "My trusty Hermès, by whose ready aid
 Thy sire's commands are through the world convey'd,

* Hermès, a name given by the Greeks to Mercury, the messenger of the gods.

Resume thy wings, exert their utmost force,
And to the walls of Sidon* speed thy course;
There find a herd of heifers wandering o'er
The neighb'ring hill, and drive them to the shore."

Thus spoke the god, concealing his intent.
The trusty Hermès on his message went,
And found the herd of heifers wand'ring o'er
A neighb'ring hill, and drove them to the shore
Where the king's daughter, with a lovely train
Of fellow-nymphs, was sporting on the plain.

The dignity of empire laid aside,
(For love but ill agrees with kingly pride,)
The ruler of the skies, the thund'ring god,
Who shakes the world's foundations with a nod,
Among a herd of lowing heifers ran,
Frisk'd in a bull, and bellow'd o'er the plain.
His skin was whiter than the snow that lies
Unsullied by the breath of southern skies;
Small shining horns on his curl'd forehead stand,
As turn'd and polish'd by the workman's hand;
His eyeballs roll'd, not formidably bright,
But gazed and languish'd with a gentle light;
His every look was peaceful, and express'd
The softness of the lover in the beast.

Agenor's royal daughter, as she play'd
Among the fields, the milk-white bull survey'd,
And view'd his spotless body with delight,
And at a distance kept him in her sight.
At length she pluck'd the rising flowers, and fed
The gentle beast, and fondly stroked his head.
And now he wantons o'er the neighb'ring strand,
Now rolls his body on the yellow sand;
And, now perceiving all her fears decay'd,
Comes tossing forward to the royal maid.
Gives her his breast to stroke, and downward turns
His grisly brow, and gently stoops his horns.
In flowery wreaths the royal virgin dress'd
His bending horns, and kindly smooth'd his breast;
Till now grown bolder, and devoid of fear,
She placed herself upon his back, and rode
O'er meads, convey'd in triumph by the god.

* Sidon, the oldest and most powerful city of Phœnicia, in Asia.

He gently march'd along, and by degrees
 Left the dry meadow, and approach'd the seas,
 Where now he dips his hoofs, and wets his thighs,
 Now plunges in, and carries off the prize.
 The frightened nymph looks backward on the shore,
 And hears the tumbling billows round her roar ;
 But still she holds him fast ; one hand is borne
 Upon his back, the other grasps a horn ;
 Her train of ruffling garments flies behind,
 Swells in the air, and hovers in the wind.

Through storms and tempests he the virgin bore,
 And lands her safe on the Dictæan shore ;*
 Where now, in his divinest form array'd,
 In his true shape he captivates the maid,
 Who gazes on him, and with wond'ring eyes
 Beholds the new majestic figure rise,
 His glowing features, and celestial light,
 And all the god discover'd to her sight.

THE FOLLOWING VERSION OF THE STORY OF EUROPA IS FROM
 DARWIN'S BOTANIC GARDEN.

Now lows a milk-white bull on Afric's strand,
 And crops with dancing head the daisied land ;
 With rosy wreaths Europa's hand adorns
 His fringed forehead, and his pearly horns ;
 Light on his back the sportive damsel bounds,
 And pleased he moves along the flowery grounds ;
 Bears with slow step his beauteous prize aloof,
 Dips in the lucid flood his ivory hoof ;
 Then wets his velvet knees, and wading laves
 His silky sides amid the dimpling waves.
 While her fond train with beckoning hands deplore,
 Strain their blue eyes, and shriek along the shore ;
 Beneath her robe she draws her snowy feet,
 And half reclining on her ermine seat,
 Round his raised neck her radiant arms she throws,
 And rests her fair cheek on his curled brows ;

* Dictæan shore, the Island of Crete, (now Candia,) was sometimes called by the poets Dictæa, from Dicte, a mountain at the eastern extremity of the island.

Her yellow tresses wave on wanton gales,
And high in air her azure mantle sails.

Onward he moves, applauding Cupids guide,
And skim on shooting wing the shining tide ;
Emerging Tritons* leave their coral caves,
Sound their loud conchs, and smooth the circling waves,
Surround the timorous beauty, as she swims,
And gaze enamour'd on her snowy limbs.
Now Europe's shadowy shores with loud acclaim,
Hail the fair fugitive, and shout her name ;
Soft echoes warble, whispering forests nod,
And conscious Nature owns the present God.

THE STORY OF CADMUS.

CADMUS,† the son of Agenor king of Phœnicia, was ordered by his father to go in pursuit of his sister Europa, (whom Jupiter had carried away,) and never to return to his native land without her. His search proving fruitless, he consulted the Oracle of Apollo respecting his future destination, by which he was directed to follow a young heifer he should meet ; to mark the place where she couched amid the grass, and there to build a city, and to call the country Bœotia. Cadmus having obeyed these instructions, prepared to offer a sacrifice to Jupiter, and sent his companions to a neighbouring grove for water ; but this grove, (sacred to Mars,‡) was guarded by a dragon to whose fury they all fell victims. Cadmus determined to avenge their death, attacked the monster, which by the assistance of Minerva,§ he overcame ; he then, at her command, sowed its teeth in the ground, from whence armed men instantly sprang up. By throwing a stone in the midst of them, he caused a civil war, and all perished except five, who assisted him in building the city. He married Hermione, the daughter of Venus, and had four daughters, Ino, Autonoe, Agave, and Semele, all of whom were persecuted by Juno either in their own

* Tritons, sea-deities.

† Cadmus was the first who introduced the Alphabet into Greece, 1493 B. C.

‡ Mars, the god of war.

§ Minerva, the goddess of wisdom,

persons or in those of their children. Their misfortunes so deeply afflicted Cadmus and his wife, that they petitioned the gods to remove them from the evils of life, and were accordingly changed into serpents.

When now Agenor had his daughter lost,
He sent his son to search on every coast,
And sternly bade him to his arms restore
The darling maid, or see his face no more,
But live an exile in a foreign clime;
Thus was the father pious to a crime.

The restless youth search'd all the world around;
But nowhere could the beauteous maid be found;
When, tired at length with unsuccessful toil,
To shun his angry sire and native soil,
He goes a suppliant to the Delphic dome;
There asks the god what new appointed home
Should end his wand'rings, and his toil relieve.
The Delphic oracles* this answer give:
"Behold among the fields a lonely cow,
Unworn with yokes, unbroken to the plough:
Mark well the place where first she lays her down,
There measure out thy walls, and build thy town;
And from thy guide, Bœotia call the land,
In which the destined walls and town shall stand."

No sooner had he left the dark abode,
Full of the promise of the Delphic god,
When in the fields the fatal cow he view'd,
Nor gall'd with yokes, nor worn with servitude;
Her, gently at a distance he pursued,
And, as he walk'd aloof, in silence pray'd
To the great power whose counsels he obey'd.

* Delphic Oracles. The Oracle of Delphi, was situate on Mount Parnassus, and was the residence of the god Apollo, who inspired a priestess, called Pythia, with prophetic answers. The Oracle was delivered in the following manner. The sacred tripod (a three legged stool) was placed over a subterraneous cavity within the temple, from whence issued a strong sulphureous vapour. On this tripod the Pythia was seated, who having inhaled the vapour through an aperture in the tripod, began to foam at the mouth, tore her hair, and the words uttered during her supposed phrenzy were clothed in verse, and returned as the answer of the Oracle. The Pythia was consulted only one month in the year, about the spring, and it was always required that those who consulted the Oracle should make large presents to Apollo.

Her way through flowery Panope she took,
 And now, Cephisus,* crossed thy silver brook,
 When to the heavens her spacious front she rais'd,
 And bellow'd thrice, then backward turning gazed
 On those behind, till on the destined place.
 She stoop'd, and couch'd amid the rising grass.

Cadmus salutes the soil, and gladly hails
 The new-found mountains and the nameless vales,
 And thanks the gods, and turns about his eye
 To see his new dominions round him lie ;
 Then sends his servants to a neighbouring grove
 For living streams, a sacrifice to Jove.
 O'er the wide plain there rose a shady wood
 Of aged trees ; in its dark bosom stood
 A bushy thicket, pathless and unworn,
 O'errun with brambles, and perplex'd with thorn :
 Amid the brake a hollow den was found,
 With rocks and shelving arches vaulted round.

Deep in the dreary den, conceal'd from day,
 Sacred to Mars, a mighty dragon lay,
 Bloated with poison to a monstrous size ;
 Fire broke in flashes when he glanced his eyes ;
 His towering crest was glorious to behold,
 His shoulders and his sides were scaled with gold ;
 Three tongues he brandish'd when he charged his foes,
 His teeth stood jaggy in three dreadful rows.
 The Tyrians in the den for water sought,
 And with their urns explored the hollow vault ;
 From side to side their empty urns rebound,
 And rouse the sleeping serpent with the sound.
 Straight he bestirs him, and is seen to rise,
 And now with dreadful hissings fills the skies,
 And darts his forked tongues, and rolls his glaring eyes.
 The Tyrians drop the vessels in their fright,
 All pale and trembling at the hideous sight.
 Spire above spire uprear'd in air he stood,
 And gazing round him overlook'd the wood,
 Then floating on the ground in circles roll'd,
 Then leap'd upon them in a mighty fold.

* Cephisus, a celebrated river of Greece, that rises in Phocis, and flows into Lake Copais in Bœotia. (Lake Copais is now called Livadia Limne.)

Of such a bulk and such a monstrous size
 The serpent* in the polar circle lies,
 That stretches over half the northern skies.
 In vain the Tyrians on their arms rely,
 In vain attempt to fight, in vain to fly ;
 All their endeavours and their hopes are vain ;
 Some die entangled in the winding train ;
 Some are devour'd, or feel a loathsome death,
 Swoln up with blasts of pestilential breath.

And now the scorching sun was mounted high,
 In all its lustre, to the noon-day sky,
 When, anxious for his friends, and fill'd with cares,
 To search the woods the impatient chief prepares.
 A lion's hide around his loins he wore,
 The well-poised javelin to the field he bore,
 Inured to blood, the far-destroying dart,
 And, the best weapon, an undaunted heart.

Soon as the youth approach'd the fatal place,
 He saw his servants breathless on the grass ;
 The scaly foe amid their corpse he view'd,
 Basking at ease, and feasting in their blood.
 " Such friends," he cried, " deserved a longer date ;
 But Cadmus will revenge, or share their fate."
 Then heaved a stone, and rising to the throw,
 He sent it in a whirlwind at the foe ;
 A tower, assaulted by so rude a stroke,
 With all its lofty battlements had shook ;
 But nothing here the unwieldy rock avails,
 Rebounding harmless from the plaited scales,
 That, firmly join'd, preserved him from a wound,
 With native armour crusted all around.
 With more success the dart unerring flew,
 Which at his back the raging warrior threw :
 Amid the plaited scales it took its course,
 And in the spinal marrow spent its force.
 The monster hiss'd aloud, and raged in vain,
 And writhed his body to and fro with pain ;
 He bit the dart, and wrench'd the wood away ;
 The point still buried in the marrow lay ;
 And now his rage, increasing with his pain,
 Reddens his eyes, and beats in every vein ;

* The serpent ; a northern constellation.

Churn'd in his teeth the foamy venom flows,
 While from his mouth a blast of vapours rose,
 Such as the infernal Stygian waters cast ;
 The plants around him wither in the blast.
 Now in a maze of rings he lies enroll'd ;
 Now all unravell'd and without a fold ;
 Now like a torrent, with a mighty force
 Bears down the forest in his boist'rous course.
 Cadmus gave back, and on the lion's spoil
 Sustain'd the shock, then forced him to recoil :
 The pointed javelin ward off his rage ;
 Mad with his pains, and furious to engage
 The serpent champs the steel, and bites the spear,
 Till blood and venom all the point besmear.
 But still the hurt he yet received was slight ;
 For, while the champion with redoubled might ;
 Strikes home the javelin, his retiring foe
 Shrinks from the wound, and disappoints the blow.

The dauntless hero still pursues his stroke,
 And presses forward, till a knotty oak
 Retards his foe, and stops him in the rear ;
 Full in his throat he plunged the fatal spear,
 That in the extended neck a passage found,
 And pierced the solid timber through the wound.
 Fix'd to the reeling trunk, with many a stroke
 Of his huge tail he lash'd the sturdy oak,
 Till spent with toil, and lab'ring hard for breath,
 He now lay twisting in the pangs of death.
 Cadmus beheld him wallow in a flood
 Of swimming poison intermix'd with blood,
 When suddenly a speech was heard from high,
 (The speech was heard, nor was the speaker nigh,)
 " Why dost thou thus with secret pleasure see,
 Insulting man ! what thou thyself shalt be ?"
 Astonish'd at the voice, he stood amazed,
 And all around, with inward horror, gazed,
 When Pallas,* swift descending from the skies,
 Pallas, the guardian of the bold and wise,
 Bids him plough up the field, and scatter round
 The dragon's teeth o'er all the furrow'd ground ;
 Then tells the youth how to his wondering eyes
 Embattled armies from the field shall rise.

* Pallas, a name given to Minerva.

He sows the teeth at Pallas's command,
 And flings the future people from his hand ;
 The clods grow warm, and crumble where he sows,
 And now the pointed spears advance in rows ;
 Now nodding plumes appear, and shining crests,
 Now the broad shoulders and the rising breasts ;
 O'er all the field a breathing harvest swarms,
 A growing host, a crop of men and arms.

Cadmus, surprised and startled at the sight
 Of his new foes, prepared himself for fight ;
 When one cried out, " Forbear, fond man, forbear,
 To mingle in a blind promiscuous war."
 This said, he struck his brother to the ground,
 Himself expiring by another's wound ;
 Nor did the third his conquest long survive,
 Dying ere scarce he had begun to live.

The dire example ran through all the field,
 Till heaps of brothers were by brothers kill'd ;
 The furrows swam in blood, and only five
 Of all the vast increase were left alive.
 Echion one, at Pallas's command
 Let fall the guiltless weapon from his hand,
 And with the rest a peaceful treaty makes,
 Whom Cadmus as his friends and partners takes.
 So founds a city on the promised earth,
 And gives his new Bœotian empire* birth.

Here Cadmus reign'd ; and now one would have guess'd
 The royal founder in his exile bless'd :
 Long did he live within his new abodes,
 Allied by marriage† to the deathless gods ;
 And when at length in honour'd years grown old,
 A long increase of children's children told :
 But no frail man, however great or high,
 Can be concluded bless'd before he die.‡

* Bœotian empire ; a country of Greece Proper, north-west of Attica.

† " Allied by marriage ;" Cadmus married Hermione, the daughter of Venus.

‡ Cadmus was rendered very unhappy in his old age, by the persecutions which his children and grandchildren endured from Juno.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF CADMUS AND HERMIONE INTO
SERPENTS.

MEANTIME the wretched Cadmus mourns, nor knows
That they who mortal fell, immortal rose.*
With a long series of new ills oppress'd,
He droops, and all the man forsakes his breast :
Strange prodigies confound his frighted eyes ;
From the fair city, which he raised, he flies ;
As if misfortune not pursued his race,
But only hung o'er that devoted place.
Resolved by sea to seek some distant land,
At last he safely gain'd the Illyrian strand.
Cheerless himself, his consort still he cheers,
Hoary, and laden both with woes and years.
Then to recount past sorrows they begin,
And trace them to the gloomy origin.

"That serpent sure was hallow'd," Cadmus cried,
"Which once my spear transfix'd with foolish pride ;
When the big teeth, a seed before unknown,
By me along the wond'ring glebe were sown,
And sprouting armies by themselves o'erthrown.
If thence the wrath of heaven on me is bent,
May heaven conclude it with one sad event ;
To an extended serpent change the man ;"
And, while he spoke, the wish'd for change began.
His skin with sea-green spots was varied round,
And on his belly prone he press'd the ground ;
He glitter'd soon with many a golden scale,
And his shrunk legs closed in a spiry tail ;
Arms yet remain'd, remaining arms he spread
To his loved wife, and human tears yet shed.
"Come, my Harmonia, come, thy face recline
Down to my face ; still touch what still is mine.
O ! let these hands, while hands, be gently press'd,
While yet the serpent has not all possess'd."
More he had spoke, but strove to speak in vain,
The forky tongue refused to tell his pain,
And learn'd in hissings only to complain.

* "That they who mortal fell, immortal rose ;" some of the grandchildren of Cadmus were, after death, made deities.

Then shriek'd Harmonia : " Stay, my Cadmus, stay,
 Glide not in such a monstrous shape away !
 Destruction, like impetuous waves, rolls on.
 Where are thy feet, thy legs, thy shoulders, gone ?
 Changed is thy visage, changed is all thy frame,
 Cadmus is only Cadmus now in name.
 Ye Gods, my Cadmus to himself restore,
 Or me like him transform ; I ask no more."

The lookers-on, (for lookers-on there were,)
 Shock'd at the sight, half died away with fear.
 The transformation was again renew'd,
 And, like the husband, chang'd the wife they view'd.
 Both serpents now, they wave along the green,
 Fearless see men, by men are fearless seen,
 Still mild, and conscious what they once have been.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF ACTÆON INTO A STAG.

ACTÆON, a celebrated huntsman, was the son of Autonoe, (the daughter of Cadmus.) He saw Diana* and her attendants bathing in a fountain, for which offence he was changed by the indignant goddess into a Stag, and was pursued and torn to pieces by his own hounds.

In a fair chase a shady mountain stood,
 Well stored with game, and mark'd with trails of blood ;
 Here did the huntsmen, till the heat of day,
 Pursue the stag, and load themselves with prey ;
 When thus Actæon, calling to the rest :
 " My friends," said he, " our sport is at the best,
 The sun is high advanced, and downward sheds
 His burning beams directly on our heads :
 Then by consent abstain from further spoils,
 Call off the dogs, and gather up the toils,

* Diana, was the daughter of Jupiter and Latona, and the sister of Apollo. She was the goddess of hunting, and is represented in a hunting habit, with a crescent on her head, a bow and arrows in her hand, surrounded by her dogs, and taller than the nymphs by whom she is attended. She was called Diana, on earth ; Luna, in heaven ; and Hecate, in hell.

And ere to-morrow's sun begins his race
 Take the cool morning to renew the chase."
 They all consent, and in a cheerful train
 The jolly huntsmen, laden with the slain,
 Return in triumph from the sultry plain.

Down in a vale with pine and cypress clad,
 Refresh'd with gentle winds, and brown with shade,
 The chaste Diana's private haunt, there stood,
 Full in the centre of the darksome wood,
 A spacious grotto, all around o'ergrown
 With hoary moss, and arch'd with pumice-stone.
 From out its rocky clefts the waters flow,
 And trickling swell into a lake below.
 Nature had every where so play'd her part,
 That every where she seem'd to vie with art.
 Here the bright goddess, when o'ercome with heat,
 Was wont to bathe her in the cool retreat.

Here did she now with all her train resort,
 Panting with toil, and breathless from the sport ;
 Her armour-bearer laid her bow aside,
 Some loosed her sandals, some her veil untied ;
 Each busy nymph her proper part undress'd,
 While Crocale, more skilful than the rest,
 Gather'd her flowing hair, and in a noose
 Bound it together, while her own hung loose ;
 Five of the more ignoble sort, by turns,
 Fetch up the water, and unlade the urns.

Now all undress'd the shining goddess stood,
 When young Actæon, wilder'd in the wood,
 To the cool grot by his hard fate betray'd,
 The fountain fill'd with beauteous nymphs survey'd.
 The frighted virgins shriek'd at the surprise,
 (The forest echo'd with their piercing cries,)
 Then in a cluster round their goddess press'd ;
 She, proudly eminent above the rest,
 With blushes glow'd ; such blushes as adorn
 The ruddy welkin, or the purple morn ;
 And though the crowding nymphs her figure hide,
 Half backward shrunk, and view'd him from aside.
 Surprised, at first she would have snatch'd her bow,
 But sees the circling waters round her flow ;
 These in the hollow of her hand she took,
 And dash'd them in his face, while thus she spoke :

"Tell, if thou canst, the wondrous sight disclosed,
A goddess naked to thy view exposed.

This said, the man began to disappear

By slow degrees, and ended in a deer.
A rising horn on either brow he wears,
And stretches out his neck, and pricks his ears ;
Rough is his skin, with sudden hair o'ergrown,
His bosom pants with fears before unknown ;
Transform'd at length, he flies away in haste,
And wonders why he flies away so fast.

But, as by chance within a neighb'ring brook,
He saw his branching horns and alter'd look,
Wretched Actæon ! in a doleful tone

He tried to speak, but only gave a groan ;
And as he wept, within the watery glass
He saw the big round drops, with silent pace,
Run trickling down a savage hairy face.

What should he do ? Or seek his old abodes,
Or herd among the deer and skulk in woods ?
Here shame dissuades him, there his fear prevails,
And each by turns his aching heart assails.

As he thus ponders, he behind him spies
His op'ning hounds, and now he hears their cries :
A ger'rous pack, or to maintain the chase,
Or snuff the vapour from the scented grass.

He bounded off with fear, and swiftly ran
O'er craggy mountains and the flow'ry plain,
Through brakes and thickets forced his way, and flew
Through many a ring where once he did pursue.

In vain he oft endeavour'd to proclaim
His new misfortune, and to tell his name ;
Nor voice, nor words, the brutal tongue supplies,
From shouting men, and horns, and dogs, he flies,
Deafen'd and stunn'd with their promiscuous cries.

When now the fleetest of the pack, that press'd
Close at his heels and sprung before the rest,
Had fasten'd on him, straight another pair
Hung on his wounded haunch, and held him there,
Till all the pack came up, and every hound
Tore the sad huntsman grovelling on the ground,
Who now appear'd but one continued wound.
With dropping tears his bitter fate he moans,
And fills the mountain with his dying groans.

His servants with a piteous look he spies,
 And turns about his supplicating eyes.
 His servants, ignorant of what had chanced,
 With eager haste and joyful shouts advanced,
 And call'd their lord, Actæon, to the game ;
 He shook his head in answer to the name ;
 He heard, but wish'd he had indeed been gone ;
 Or only to have stood a looker-on :
 But to his grief he finds himself too near,
 And feels his ravenous dogs with fury tear
 Their wretched master panting in a deer.

THE STORY OF SEMELE, AND THE BIRTH OF BACCHUS.

JUNO having discovered the passion of Jupiter for Semele, the beautiful daughter of Cadmus, her jealousy and indignation were excited, and she determined to effect the destruction of her rival. For this purpose, having borrowed the girdle of Atë,* the goddess assumed the form of Beroë, (the nurse of Semele,) with whom in that disguise she obtained an interview. By her artful advice, Semele was induced to entreat Jupiter to appear before her attended with the same pomp and majesty as when he visited Juno. This rash request was heard with horror by the God ; but as he had sworn by the Styx† to grant Semele whatever she required, he accordingly descended in the full blaze of his glory, surrounded by clouds, lightning, and thunderbolts. The mortal nature of Semele was unable to endure such majesty, and she was instantly consumed by lightning. Her child was saved from the flames, and called Bacchus. Semele was honoured after death with immortality under the name of Thyone.

Actæon's sufferings, and Diana's rage,
 Did all the thoughts of men and gods engage ;

* The girdle of Atë, the goddess of Evil, contained every kind of deceit, wickedness, and perfidy.

† Styx, a celebrated river of hell, round which it flows nine times. The gods held the waters of the Styx in such veneration, that they always swore by them ; an oath which was inviolable.

Some call'd the evils which Diana wrought
 Too great, and disproportion'd to the fault :
 Others, again, esteem'd Actæon's woes
 F'it for a virgin goddess to impose.
 The hearers into different parts divide,
 And reasons are produced on either side.

Juno alone, of all that heard the news,
 Nor would condemn the goddess, nor excuse ;
 She heeded not the justice of the deed,
 But joy'd to see the race of Cadmus bleed ;*
 For still she kept Europa† in her mind,
 And, for her sake, detested all her kind.
 Besides, to aggravate her hate, she heard,
 That Jove the beauteous Semele ador'd ;
 Thus terribly incensed, the goddess broke
 To sudden fury, and abruptly spoke :
 " Are my reproaches of so small a force ?
 'Tis time I then pursue another course.
 It is decreed the guilty wretch shall die,
 If I'm indeed the mistress of the sky ;
 If rightly styled, among the powers above,
 The wife and sister of the thundering Jove."
 This said, descending in a yellow cloud,
 Before the gates of Semele she stood.

Old Beroë's decrepit form she wears,
 Her wrinkled visage, and her hoary hairs,
 While in her trembling gait she totters on,
 And learns to tattle in the nurse's tongue.
 The goddess thus disguis'd in age, beguiled
 With pleasing stories her false foster-child.
 Much did she talk of love, and when she came
 To mention to the nymph her lover's name,
 Fetching a sigh, and holding down her head,
 "'Tis well," said she, "if all be true that's said.
 But trust me, child, I'm much inclined to fear
 Some counterfeit in this your Jupiter.
 But if he be indeed the thund'ring Jove,
 Bid him, when next he woos you with his love,

* "But joy'd to see the race of Cadmus bleed." Actæon, who had been transformed to a stag by Diana, was the grandson of Cadmus.

† "For still she kept Europa in her mind." Europa was the sister of Cadmus. See story of Europa, page 43.

Descend triumphant, from the ethereal sky,
In all the pomp of his divinity."

The unwary nymph, ensnared by the deceit,
Desired of Jove his visit to repeat,
And grant a certain gift which she would choose.
"Fear not," replied the god, "that I'll refuse
Whate'er you ask : may Styx confirm my voice,
Choose what you will, and you shall have your choice."
"Then," said the nymph, "if you will prove your love,
And are indeed the high imperial Jove,
Descend triumphant from the ethereal sky
In all the pomp of your divinity"—

The god surprised, would fain have stopp'd her voice,
But he had sworn, and she had made her choice.

To keep his promise he ascends, and shrouds
His awful brow in whirlwinds and in clouds ;
While all around, in terrible array,
His thunders rattle and his lightnings play.
Thus dreadfully adorn'd, with horror bright,
The illustrious god, descending from his height,
Came rushing downward in a storm of light.

The mortal dame, too feeble to engage
The lightning's flashes and the thunder's rage,
Consum'd amid the glories she desir'd,
And in the fearful interview expir'd.
But Jove preserved his offspring from the tomb,
And Bacchus shar'd not his rash mother's doom.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF CALISTO, AND HER SON ARCAS,
INTO CONSTELLATIONS.

JUPITER, captivated with the charms of Calisto, a nymph
in the train of Diana, Juno transformed her into a Bear, whom,
with her son Arcas, Jupiter removed to heaven, and changed
into constellations, called Ursa Major and Ursa Minor, (the
great Bear and the little Bear.) Juno thus vents her indig-
nation and lamentations at her rival's elevation :

Calisto and her son Jove bore through air
In whirlwinds up to heaven, and fix'd them there ;
Where the new constellations nightly rise,
And add a lustre to the northern skies.

When Juno saw her rival in her height
 Spangled with stars and circled round with light,
 She sought old Ocean in his deep abodes,
 And Tethys, both revered among the gods.
 They ask what brings her there. "Ne'er ask," said she,
 "What brings me here, heaven is no place for me.
 You'll see, when all things are obscured by night,
 Jove's starry mistress with resplendent light
 Usurp the heavens; you'll see her proudly roll
 In her new orb, and brighten all the pole.
 And who shall now on Juno's altars wait,
 When those she hates grow greater by her hate?
 I, on the nymph a brutal form impress'd,
 Jove to a goddess has transform'd the beast.
 But you, ye venerable powers, be kind,
 And, if my wrongs a due resentment find,
 Receive not in your waves their setting beams,*
 Nor let my rival's lustre taint your streams."
 The goddess ended, and her wish was given.
 Back she return'd in triumph up to heaven;
 Her gaudy peacocks bore her through the skies,
 Their feathers spotted with a thousand eyes;
 The eyes of Argus on their plumage spread,
 Which Juno thus preserved when Argus bled.†

 THE STORY OF TIRESIAS.

TIRESIAS, a celebrated prophet of Thebes, was deprived of his sight by Juno; but this dreadful misfortune was in some degree remedied by the humanity of Jupiter, who bestowed upon him the gift of prophecy, and permitted him to live seven times longer than the rest of men.

* "Receive not in your waves their setting beams." These constellations are included in the circle of "perpetual apparition;" as they never dip below the horizon in northern latitudes. Homer thus mentions this circumstance:

To which, around the axle of the sky,
 The Bear revolving, points his golden eye,
 Still shines exalted on th' ethereal plain,
 Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.

† See "The eyes of Argus placed by Juno on the tail of the Peacock," page 98.

Juno deprived Tiresias of his sight,
And left him groping round in sudden night.
But Jove (for so it is in heaven decreed
That no one god repeal another's deed)
Irradiates all his soul with inward light,
And with the prophet's art relieves his want of sight.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF ECHO, AND THE STORY OF
NARCISSUS.

ECHO, a daughter of the Air, was one of the attendants of Juno, by whom she was partially deprived of speech, and permitted to answer questions only. Echo fell in love with Narcissus, but despised by him, she pined away, and was at last changed into a rock which still retains the power of voice. Narcissus, a beautiful youth, the son of Cephisus and the nymph Liriope, seeing his image reflected in a fountain, and supposing it to be the nymph of the place, became enamoured of it; but unable to approach the object of his admiration, he pined to death with grief, and was changed into the flower which still retains his name.

Famed far and near for knowing things to come,
From blind Tiresias nations sought their doom.
The fair Liriope his answers tried,
And first the unerring prophet justified.

The tender dame, solicitous to know
Whether her child should reach old age or no,
Consults the sage Tiresias; who replies,
"If e'er he knows himself he surely dies."
Long lived the dubious mother in suspense,
Till time unriddled all the prophet's sense.

Narcissus now his sixteenth year began,
Just turn'd of boy, and on the verge of man;
Many a nymph the blooming boy caress'd,
Many a love-sick maid her flame confess'd;
Such was his pride, in vain the nymph caress'd,
The love-sick maid in vain her flame confess'd.

Once, in the woods, as he pursued the chase,
The babbling Echo had descried his face,
She, who in other's words her silence breaks,
Nor speaks herself but when another speaks.

Echo was then a maid of speech bereft,
Of wonted speech ; for though her voice was left,
Juno a curse did on her tongue impose,
To sport with every sentence in the close.
Hence 'tis she prattles in a fainter tone,
With mimic sounds and accents not her own.

This love-sick virgin, overjoy'd to find
The boy alone, still follow'd him behind ;
She long'd her hidden passion to reveal,
And tell her love, but had not words to tell ;
She can't begin, but waits for the rebound
To catch his voice, and to return the sound.

The nymph, when nothing could Narcissus move,
Still dash'd with blushes for her slighted love,
Lived in the shady covert of the woods,
In solitary caves and dark abodes,
Where pining wander'd the dejected fair,
Till harass'd out and worn away with care ;
At last her plaintive voice alone was left ;
Of substance and corporeal frame bereft :
Her bones were petrified, her voice is found
In vaults, where still it doubles every sound.

Thus did the nymphs in vain caress the boy,
He still was lovely, but he still was coy ;
When one fair virgin of the slighted train
Thus pray'd the gods, provoked by his disdain :
" O ! may he love like me, and love like me in vain !"
Rhamnusia* pitied the neglected fair,
And with just vengeance answer'd to her prayer.

There stands a fountain in a darksome wood,
Nor stain'd with falling leaves, nor rising mud ;
Untroubled by the breath of winds it rests,
Unsullied by the touch of men or beasts ;
High bowers of shady trees above it grow,
And rising grass and cheerful greens below.
Pleased with the form and coolness of the place,
And overheated by the morning's chase,
Narcissus on the grassy verdure lies ;
But while within the crystal fount he tries
To quench his heat, he feels new heat arise :

* Rhamnusia, the goddess of vengeance. She is also called Nemesis.

For, as his own bright image he survey'd,
He fell in love with the fantastic shade,
And o'er the fair resemblance hung unmoved ;
Nor knew, fond youth ! it was himself he loved.
The well-turned neck and shoulders he describes,
The spacious forehead, and the sparkling eyes,
The hands that Bacchus might not scorn to show,
And hair that round Apollo's head might flow,
With all the purple youthfulness of face,
That gently blushes in the watery glass.
By his own flames consumed the lover lies,
And gives himself the wound by which he dies.
To the cold water oft he joins his lips,
Oft catching at the beauteous shade he dips
His arms, as often from himself he slips.
Nor knows he who it is his arms pursue
With eager clasps, but loves he knows not who.
What could, fond youth, this hapless passion move ?
What kindle in thee this unpitied love ?
Thy own warm blush within the water glows,
With thee the coloured shadow comes and goes,
Its empty being on thyself relies ;
Step thou aside, and the frail charmer dies.
Still o'er the fountain's watery gleam he stood,
Mindless of sleep, and negligent of food ;
Still view'd his face, and languish'd as he view'd.
At length he raised his head, and thus began
To vent his griefs, and tell the woods his pain :
" You trees," said he, " and thou surrounding grove,
Who oft have been the kindly scenes of love,
Tell me, if e'er within your shades did lie
A youth so tortured, so perplexed as I ?
I, who before me see the charming fair,
While there she stands, and yet she stands not there :
In such a maze of love my thoughts are lost ;
And yet no bulwark'd town nor distant coast
Preserves the beauteous nymph from being seen,
No mountains rise nor oceans flow between ;
A shallow water hinders my embrace,
And yet the lovely mimic wears a face
That kindly smiles, and when I bend to join
My lips to hers, she fondly bends to mine.
Hear, gentle nymph, and pity my complaint ;
Come from thy well, thou fair inhabitant.

My charms an easy conquest have obtain'd
O'er other hearts, by thee alone disdain'd.
But why should I despair? I'm sure she feels
A love for me, which every look reveals.
Whene'er I stoop to offer at a kiss,
Her form she bends as if to grant the bliss;
Her eyes with pleasure on my face she keeps,
She smiles my smiles, and when I weep she weeps;
Whene'er I speak her moving lips appear
To utter something, which I cannot hear.

"Ah, wretched me! I now begin too late
To find out all the long perplex'd deceit;
It is myself I love, myself I see,
The gay delusion is a part of me;
And now I faint with grief, my fate draws nigh,
In all the pride of blooming youth I die.
Death will the sorrows of my heart relieve.
O! might the visionary nymph survive,
I should with joy my latest breath resign!
But, ah! I see her fate involved in mine."

This said, the weeping youth again return'd
To the clear fountain, where again he mourn'd.
His tears defaced the surface of the well
With circle after circle as they fell;
And now the lovely face but half appears,
O'errun with wrinkles and deformed with tears.
"Ah! whither," cries Narcissus, "dost thou fly?
Let me still feed the flame by which I die;
Let me still see, though I'm no further bless'd."
Then rends his garments off and beats his breast;
As wax dissolves, and ice begins to run,
And trickle into drops before the sun,
So melts the youth, and languishes away,
His beauty withers, and his limbs decay,
And none of those attractive charms remain,
To which the slighted Echo sued in vain.

She saw him in his present misery,
Whom, spite of all her wrongs, she grieved to see.
She answer'd sadly to the lover's moan,
Sigh'd back his sighs, and groan'd to every groan.
"Ah! I have loved in vain," Narcissus cries;
"Ah! I have loved in vain," the nymph replies.
"Farewell," said he; the parting sound scarce fell
From his faint lips, but she replied, "Farewell."

Then on the unwholesome earth he gasping lies,
Till death shuts up those self-admiring eyes.
To the cold shades his flitting ghost retires,
And in the Stygian waves itself admires.

For him the Naiads* and the Dryads† mourn,
Whom the sad Echo answers in her turn :
And now the sister-nymphs prepare his urn :
When looking for his corpse, they only found
A beauteous flower, still with his name renown'd :
A crown of milk-white stars adorn the stem,
And in the centre beams a saffron gem.

THE STORY OF PENTHEUS.

PENTHEUS, king of Thebes, was the son of Echion and Agave. Having refused to acknowledge the divinity of Bacchus, and endeavoured to prohibit the celebration of his orgies, he was torn to pieces by his own mother and her sisters, for presuming to witness, as an unhallowed spectator, their Bacchanalian revels.

Narcissus' fate gave blind Tiresias fame,
Through Greece established in a prophet's name.

The unhallowed Pentheus only durst deride
The cheated people and their eyeless guide.
To whom the prophet in his fury said,
Shaking the hoary honours of his head,
" 'Twere well, presumptuous man, 'twere well for thee,
If thou wert eyeless too, and blind like me :
For the time comes, nay, 'tis already here,
When the young god's solemnities appear,
Which, if thou dost not with just rites adorn,
Thy impious carcase, into pieces torn,
Shall strew the woods, and hang on every thorn.
Then, then remember what I now foretel,
And own the blind Tiresias saw too well."

Still Pentheus scorns him, and derides his skill :
But time did all the prophet's threats fulfil.

* Naiads; inferior deities, who presided over rivers, springs, wells, and fountains.

† Dryads, nymphs who presided over the woods,

For now through prostrate Greece young Bacchus rode,
 While howling matrons celebrate the god.
 All ranks and sexes to his orgies ran,
 To mingle in the pomps and fill the train ;
 When Pentheus thus his wicked rage express'd :
 " What madness, Thebans, has your souls possess'd ?
 Can hollow timbrels, can a drunken shout,
 And the lewd clamours of a beastly rout,
 Thus quell your courage ? Can the weak alarm
 Of women's yells those stubborn souls disarm,
 Whom nor the sword nor trumpet e'er could fright,
 Nor the loud din and horror of a fight ?
 And you, our sires, who left your old abodes,
 And fixed in foreign earth your country's gods,
 Will you without a stroke your city yield,
 And poorly quit an undisputed field ?
 But you, whose youth and vigour should inspire
 Heroic warmth, and kindle martial fire,
 Whom burnish'd arms, and crested helmets grace,
 Not flowery garlands and a painted face ;
 Remember him to whom you stand allied ;
 The serpent for his well of waters died.*
 He fought the strong, do you his courage show,
 And gain a conquest o'er a feeble foe.
 If Thebes must fall, O might the fates afford
 A nobler doom from famine, fire, or sword ;
 Then might the Thebans perish with renown :
 But now a beardless victor sacks the town,
 Whom nor the prancing steed, nor penderous shield,
 Nor the hack'd helmet, nor the dusty field,
 But the soft joys of luxury and ease,
 The purple vests, and flowery garlands, please.
 Stand then aside, I'll make the counterfeit
 Renounce his godhead, and confess the cheat.
 Acrisius from the Grecian walls repell'd
 This boasted power : why then should Pentheus yield ?
 Go quickly, drag the impostor boy to me,
 I'll try the force of his divinity."

* " The serpent for his well of waters died." Cadmus, the founder of Thebes, intending to offer a sacrifice to Jupiter, sent his companions to a grove for water, which they found guarded by an enormous dragon, to whose fury they all fell victims ; but Cadmus revenged their death, by destroying the monster. See story of Cadmus, page 46.

Thus did the audacious wretch those rites profane ;
 His friends dissuade the audacious wretch in vain ;
 In vain his grandsire* urged him to give o'er
 His impious threats, the wretch but raves the more.

So have I seen a river gently glide
 In a smooth course and inoffensive tide,
 But if with dams its current we restrain,
 It bears down all, and foams along the plain.

But now his servants came, besmear'd with blood,
 Sent by their haughty prince to seize the god ;
 The god they found not in the frantic throng,
 But dragg'd a zealous votary along.

Him Pentheus view'd with fury in his look,
 And scarce withheld his hands while thus he spoke :
 " Vile slave ! whom speedy vengeance shall pursue,
 And terrify thy base seditious crew,
 Thy country and thy parentage reveal,
 And why thou join'st in these mad orgies tell."

The captive views him with undaunted eyes,
 And, arm'd with inward innocence, replies :

THE STORY OF ACÆTES, AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE
 MARINERS INTO DOLPHINS, BY BACCHUS.

" FROM high Mæonia† rocky shores I came,
 Of poor descent, Acætes is my name.
 My sire was meanly born ; no oxen plough'd
 His fruitful fields, nor in his pastures low'd ;
 His whole estate within the waters lay,
 With lines and hooks he caught the finny prey ;
 His art was all his livelihood, which he
 Thus with his dying lips bequeathed to me :
 ' In streams, my boy, and rivers, take thy chance,
 There swims', said he, ' thy whole inheritance.'
 Long did I live on this poor legacy,
 Till, tired with rocks and my old native sky,

* " In vain his grandsire." Cadmus was the grandfather of Pentheus.

† Mæonia, (afterwards Lydia,) a country in Asia Minor.

To arts of navigation I inclined,
 Observed the turns and changes of the wind,
 Learn'd the fit havens, and began to note
 The stormy Hyades, the rainy Goat,
 The bright Taygete, and the shining Bears,
 With all the sailors' catalogue of stars.
 Once, as by chance for Delos* I design'd,
 My vessel, driven by a strong gust of wind,
 Moor'd in a Chian creek : ashore I went,
 And all the following night in Chios† spent.
 When morning rose, I sent my mates to bring
 Supplies of water from a neighbouring spring,
 While I the motion of the winds explored ;
 Then summoned in my crew and went aboard.
 Opheltas heard my summons, and with joy
 Brought to the shore a soft and lovely boy,
 With more than female sweetness in his look,
 Whom straggling in the neighb'ring fields he took.
 With fumes of wine the little captive glows,
 And nods with sleep, and staggers as he goes.
 " I view'd him nicely, and began to trace
 Each heavenly feature, each immortal grace,
 And saw divinity in all his face :
 ' I know not who,' said I, ' this god should be,
 But that he is a god I plainly see.
 And thou, whoe'er thou art, excuse the force
 These men have used, and O befriend our course !'
 ' Pray not for us,' the nimble Dictys cried,
 Dictys, that could the main top-mast bestride,
 And down the ropes with active vigour slide.
 To the same purpose old Epopeus spoke,
 Who overlook'd the oars, and timed the stroke :
 The same the pilot, and the same the rest,
 Such impious avarice their souls possess'd.
 " ' Nay, Heaven forbid that I should bear away
 Within my vessel so divine a prey,'
 Said I ; and stood to hinder their intent ;
 When Lycabas, a wretch for murder sent
 From Tuscany, to suffer banishment,

* Delos, an island in the *Ægean* Sea.

† Chios, (or Scio,) an island in the *Ægean* Sea, supposed by some to have been the birth place of Homer.

With his clinch'd fist had struck me overboard,
 Had not my hands in falling grasp'd a cord.
 "His base confederates the act approve,
 When Bacchus (for 'twas he) began to move,
 Waked by the noise and clamours which they raised,
 And shook his drowsy limbs, and round him gazed :
 'What means this noise?' he cried, 'am I betray'd ?
 Ah! whither, whither must I be convey'd ?
 'Fear not,' said Proteus, 'child, but tell us where
 You wish to land, and trust our friendly care.'
 'To Naxos,* then direct your course,' said he,
 'Naxos a hospitable port shall be
 To each of you, a joyful home to me.'
 By every god that rules the sea or sky,
 The perjured villains promise to comply,
 And bid me hasten to unmoor the ship.
 With eager joy I launch into the deep,
 And heedless of the fraud, for Naxos stand.
 They whisper oft, and beckon with the hand,
 And give me signs, all anxious for their prey,
 To tack about and steer another way.
 'Then let some other to my post succeed,'
 Said I, 'I'm guiltless of so foul a deed.'
 'What!' said Ethalion, 'must the ship's whole crew
 Follow your humour, and depend on you ?'
 And straight himself he seated at the prore,
 And tack'd about, and sought another shore.
 "The beauteous youth now found himself betray'd,
 And from the deck the rising waves survey'd,
 And seem'd to weep, and as he wept he said :
 'And do you thus my easy faith beguile ?
 Thus do ye bear me to my native isle ?
 Will such a multitude of men employ
 Their strength against a weak, defenceless boy ?'
 "In vain did I the godlike youth deplore,
 The more I begg'd, they thwarted me the more.
 And now by all the gods in heaven, that hear
 This solemn oath, by Bacchus' self I swear,
 The mighty miracle that did ensue,
 Although it seems beyond belief, is true.
 The vessel, fix'd and rooted in the flood,
 Unmoved by all the beating billows, stood.

* Naxos, (now Naxia,) an island in the Ægean Sea.

In vain the mariners would plough the main
 With sails unfurl'd, and strike their oars in vain ;
 Around their oars a twining ivy cleaves,
 And climbs the mast, and hides the cords in leaves :
 The sails are cover'd with a cheerful green,
 And berries in the fruitful canvass seen.
 Amid the waves a sudden forest rears
 Its verdant head, and a new spring appears.

" The god we now behold with opened eyes ;
 A herd of spotted panthers round him lies
 In glaring forms ; the grapy clusters spread
 On his fair brows, and dangle on his head.
 And while he frowns and brandishes his spear,
 My mates, surpris'd with madness or with fear,
 Leap'd overboard ; first perjurd Madon found
 Rough scales and fins his stiff'ning sides surround.

" Ah ! what," cries one, 'has thus transform'd thy look ?'
 Straight his own mouth grew wider as he spoke :
 And now himself he views with like surprise.
 Still at his oar the industrious Libys plies ;
 But as he plies, each busy arm shrinks in,
 And by degrees is fashion'd to a fin.
 Another, as he catches at a cord,
 Misses his arms, and, tumbling overboard,
 With his broad fins and forky tail he laves
 The rising surge, and flounces in the waves.
 Thus all my crew transform'd around the ship,
 Or dive below, or on the surface leap,
 And spout the waves, and wanton in the deep.
 Full nineteen sailors did the ship convey,
 A shoal of nineteen dolphins round her play.
 I only in my proper shape appear,
 Speechless with wonder, and half dead with fear,
 Till Bacchus kindly bid me fear no more.
 With him I landed on the Chian shore,
 And him shall ever gratefully adore."

" This forging slave," said Pentheus, " would prevail
 O'er our just fury by a far-fetch'd tale :
 Go ; let him feel the whips, the sword, the fire,
 And in the tortures of the rack expire."
 The officious servants hurry him away,
 And the poor captive in a dungeon lay.
 But, while the whips and tortures are prepar'd,
 The gates fly open, of themselves unbarred ;

At liberty the unfetter'd captive stands,
And flings the loosen'd shackles from his hands.

THE DEATH OF PENTHEUS.

BUT Pentheus, grown more furious than before,
Resolved to send his messengers no more,
But went himself to the distracted throng,
Where high Cithæron* echo'd with their song.
And as the fiery war-horse paws the ground,
And snorts and trembles at the trumpet's sound,
Transported thus he heard the frantic rout,
And raved and madden'd at the distant shout.

A spacious circuit on the hill there stood;
Level and wide, and skirted round with wood;
Here the rash Pentheus, with unhallow'd eyes,
The howling dames and mystic orgies spies.
His mother sternly view'd him where he stood,
And kindled into madness as she view'd:
Her leafy javelin at her son she cast,
And cries, "The boar that lays our country waste!
The boar, my sisters! aim the fatal dart,
And strike the brindled monster to the heart."

Pentheus astonish'd heard the dismal sound,
And sees the yelling matrons gathering round;
He sees, and weeps at his approaching fate,
And begs for mercy, and repents too late.
"Help! help! my aunt Autonoe," he cried,
"Remember how your own Actæon died."
His mother howl'd, and, heedless of his prayer,
Her trembling hand she twisted in his hair,
"And this," she cried, "shall be Agave's share."
With such a sudden death lay Pentheus slain,
And in a thousand pieces strew'd the plain.

By so distinguishing a judgment aw'd,
The Thebans tremble and confess the god.

* Cithæron, an elevated ridge of mountains, dividing Bœotia first from Megaris, and afterwards from Attica. Its modern name is Elatea.

THE STORY OF ALCITHOE AND HER SISTERS.

ALCITHOE was a Theban female, who, together with her sisters, contemned and ridiculed the orgies of Bacchus,* for which offence they were transformed by the indignant deity into Bats; and the spindles and yarn with which they worked were changed to ivy.

Yet still Alcithoe perverse remains,
And Bacchus still and all his rites disdains.
Too rash and madly bold, she bids him prove
Himself a god, nor owns the son of Jove.
Her sisters, too, unanimous agree,
Faithful associates in impiety.

Be this a solemn feast, the priest had said;
Be, with each mistress, unemployed each maid.
With skins of beasts your tender limbs enclose,
And with an ivy crown adorn your brows;
The leafy thyrsus, high in triumph bear,
And give your locks to wanton in the air.
These rites profane, the holy seer foreshow'd
A mourning people, and a vengeful god.
Matrons and pious wives obedience show,
Distaffs, and wool half spun, away they throw:
Then incense burn, and, Bacchus, thee adore:
Or lovest thou Nysæus† or Lyæus, more?
O! heavenly born, (with one accord they sung,)
Thou mighty Bromius, hail! from lightning sprung.

* Bacchus, was the son of Jupiter and Semele, (the daughter of Cadmus.) He was worshipped as the god of wine, and his festivals, called Orgies or Bacchanalia, were attended with much revelry and wickedness. He is represented as a youth, crowned with ivy, and holding in his hand a thyrsus or javelin bound with the same plant; his car is drawn by panthers, lions, or tigers, and he is surrounded by a band of Satyrs, frantic women, and demons, in extravagant postures. He is sometimes represented naked, and riding on the shoulders of Pan, or in the arms of Silenus his foster-father; and sometimes, sitting upon a celestial globe bespangled with stars: he is then the same as the sun, or Osiris of Egypt. Bacchus received the appellations of Nyseus, Lyæus, Thyon, Eleleus, Iacchus, Evan, and Liber, from the places where he received adoration, or from the ceremonies observed in his festivals.

† Nyseus, a surname of Bacchus, derived from his being worshipped at Nysa, a city of India.

Hail ! Thyon,* Eleleus, each name is thine :
 Or listen parent of the genial vine !
 Iacchus ! Evan ! loudly they repeat,
 And not one Grecian attribute forget,
 Which to thy praise, great deity belong,
 Styled, justly, Liber in the Roman song.
 Eternity of youth is thine ! enjoy
 Years roll'd on years, yet still a blooming boy.
 In heaven thou shinest with a superior grace ;
 Conceal thy horns,† and 'tis a virgin's face.
 Thou taught'st the tawny Indian‡ to obey,
 And Ganges, smoothly flowing, own'd thy sway.
 Lycurgus, Pentheus, equally profane,
 By thy just vengeance equally were slain.
 By thee the Tuscans, who conspired to keep
 Thee captive, plunged and cut with fins the deep.
 With painted reins, all glittering from afar,
 The spotted Lynxes proudly draw thy car ;
 Around, the Bacchæ§ and the Satyrs¶ throng,
 Behind, Silenus,** drunk, lags slow along ;
 On his dull ass he nods from side to side,
 Forbears to fall, yet half forgets to ride.
 Still at thy near approach applauses loud
 Are heard, with yellings of the female crowd ;
 Timbrels, and boxen pipes, with mingled cries,
 Swell up in sounds confused and rend the skies.
 Come, Bacchus, come propitious, all implore,
 And act thy secret orgies o'er and o'er.
 But Mineus' daughters, while these rites were paid,
 At home impertinently busy staid ;

* Thyon : Bacchus was so called in honour of his mother Semele, to whom the name of Thyone was given after death, when she was honoured with immortality.

† Conceal thy horns. Bacchus is sometimes represented with horns.

‡ "Thou taught'st the tawny Indian to obey." Bacchus subdued the greater part of India, teaching the conquered nations the use of the vine, the cultivation of the earth, and the art of making honey.

§ Bacchæ ; priestesses of Bacchus.

¶ Satyrs ; demi-gods of the country ; they are represented like men, but having the legs and feet of goats, short horns on their heads, and their whole body covered with thick hair.

** Silenus ; the foster-father, preceptor, and constant companion of Bacchus.

Their wicked tasks they ply with various art,
 And through the loom the sliding shuttle dart,
 Or at the fire to comb the wool they stand,
 Or twirl the spindle with a dext'rous hand.
 Guilty themselves, they force the guiltless in,
 Their maids, who share the labour, share the sin.
 At last one sister cries, who nimbly knew
 To draw nice threads, and wind the finest clew,
 " While others idly rove, and gods revere,
 Their fancied gods! they know not who or where ;
 Let us, whom Pallas* taught her better arts,
 Still working, cheer with mirthful chat our hearts ;
 And, to deceive the time, let me prevail
 With each by turns to tell some antique tale."

She said : her sisters liked the humour well,
 And, smiling, bade her the first story tell.
 But she awhile profoundly seem'd to muse,
 Perplex'd amid variety to choose ;
 And knew not whether she should first relate
 The poor Dercetis,† and her wond'rous fate,
 (The Palestines believe it to a man,
 And show the lake in which her scales began :)
 Or if she rather should the daughter sing,
 Who in the hoary verge of life took wing ;
 Who soar'd from earth, and dwelt in towers on high,
 And now a dove she flits along the sky ;
 Or how the tree, which once white berries bore,
 Still crimson bears, since stain'd with crimson gore.
 The tree was new ; she likes it, and begins
 To tell the tale, and as she tells she spins.

THE STORY OF PYRAMUS AND THISBE.

PYRAMUS and Thisbe, two youthful lovers of Babylon,
 being forbidden by their parents to meet and indulge their

* Pallas, a name given to Minerva. She was the inventress of spinning and weaving.

† Dercetis, a goddess of Syria. Having offended Venus, she in despair threw herself into a lake, and was changed to a fish. She is represented as a beautiful woman above the waist, and the lower part terminating in a fish's tail. She was the mother of the celebrated Semiramis, queen of Babylon.

mutual affection, breathed to each other their vows of fidelity and love, through a crevice in the wall which separated their dwellings. Determined at length to elude the vigilance of their friends, they agreed to meet at the tomb of Ninus without the walls of Babylon. Thisbe first reached the appointed place, but terrified at the sudden appearance of a lioness, she fled into a neighbouring cave, dropping her veil in her fright, which the furious animal trampled upon and besmeared with blood. Pyramus soon after arrived, and finding the bloody veil of Thisbe, concluding that she had been torn to pieces by the wild beasts of the place, in an agony of grief stabbed himself to the heart. When Thisbe had recovered from her alarm, she left the cave to return to the place where she was to meet her lover ; but on approaching the spot, his dying body met her view. Frantic at the sight, and determined not to survive the object of her affections, she plunged the weapon in her bosom, still reeking with his blood, and fell lifeless by his side. The white mulberry tree under whose shade the death of the lovers took place, stained with their blood, ever after produced purple fruit.

" In Babylon, where first her Queen,* for state,
 Raised walls of brick magnificently great,
 Lived Pyramus and Thisbe, lovely pair !
 He found no eastern youth his equal there,
 And she beyond the fairest nymph was fair.
 A closer neighbourhood was never known,
 Though two the houses, yet the roof was one.
 Acquaintance grew, the acquaintance they improve
 To friendship, friendship ripen'd into love :
 Love had been crown'd, but, impotently mad,
 What parents could not hinder they forbade :
 With ardent love young Pyramus still woo'd,
 And grateful Thisbe own'd her heart subdued.
 Aloud in words their thoughts they dare not break,
 But silent stand : and silent looks can speak.
 The fire of love, the more it is suppress'd,
 The more it glows and rages in the breast.
 When the division-wall was built, a chink
 Was left, the cement unobserv'd to shrink.

* Semiramis.

So slight the cranny, that it still had been
 For centuries unclosed, because unseen.
 But, oh! what thing so small, so secret lies,
 Which 'scapes, if form'd for love, a lover's eyes?
 E'en in this narrow chink they quickly found
 A friendly passage for a trackless sound:
 Safely they told their sorrows and their joys,
 In whisper'd murmurs and a dying noise;
 Oft, as on different sides they stood, they cried,
 ' Malicious wall, thus lovers to divide!
 Oh! wouldst thou for a while to us give place,
 That we might view each other face to face;
 And grant for once the pure and fervent bliss,
 To give and to receive a parting kiss:
 We scorn ingratitude: to thee, we know,
 This safe conveyance of our minds we owe.'
 "Thus they their vain petition still renew
 Till night, and then they softly sigh adieu.
 Soon as the morn had o'er the stars prevail'd,
 And, warm'd by Phœbus,* flowers their dews exhaled,
 The lovers to their well-known place return,
 Alike they suffer and alike they mourn.
 At last their parents they resolve to cheat,
 (If to deceive in love be call'd deceit,)
 To steal by night from home, and thence unknown
 To seek the fields, and quit the unfaithful town.
 But, to prevent their wand'ring in the dark,
 They both agree to fix upon a mark,
 A mark, that could not their designs expose,
 The tomb of Ninus was the mark they chose.
 There they might meet secure beneath the shade,
 Which boughs, with snowy fruit encumber'd, made:
 A wide-spread mulberry its rise had took
 Just on the margin of a gurgling brook.
 Impatient for the friendly dusk they stay,
 And chide the slowness of departing day.
 In western seas down sunk at last the light,
 From western seas uprose the shades of night.
 Fair Thisbe e'en anticipates the hour,
 With cautious silence she unlocks the door,
 And veils her face, and stealing through the gloom,
 Swiftly arrives at the appointed tomb.

* *Phœbus*, a name given to Apollo, as god of the sun.

For still the fearful sex can fearless prove,
 Boldly they act, if spirited by love.
 When lo! a lioness rush'd o'er the plain,
 Grimly besmear'd with blood of oxen slain :
 And what to the dire sight new horrors brought,
 To slake her thirst the neighbouring spring she sought ;
 Which by the moon, when trembling Thisbe spies,
 Wing'd with her fear, swift as the wind, she flies,
 And in a cave recovers from her fright,
 But dropp'd her veil, confounded in her flight.
 When sated with repeated draughts, again
 The queen of beasts scour'd back along the plain :
 She found the veil, and, mouthing it all o'er,
 With bloody jaws the lifeless prey she tore.

"The youth, who could not cheat his guards so soon,
 Late came, and noted by the glimmering moon
 Some savage feet new printed on the ground,
 His cheek turn'd pale, his limbs no vigour found :
 But when, advancing on, the veil he spied
 Distain'd with blood, and ghastly torn, he cried,
 'One night shall death to two young lovers give,
 But she deserved unnumber'd years to live !
 'Tis I am guilty, I have thee betray'd,
 Who came not early as my charming maid.
 Whatever slew thee, I the cause remain,
 I named and fixed the place where thou wast slain.
 Ye lions, from your neighb'ring dens repair,
 Pity the wretch ; this impious body tear !
 But cowards thus for death can idly cry ;
 The brave still have it in their power to die.'
 Then to the appointed tree he hastes away,
 The veil first gather'd, though all rent it lay ;
 The veil all rent, yet still itself endears,
 He kiss'd, and kissing, wash'd it with his tears.
 'Though rich,' he cried, 'with many a precious stain,
 Still from my blood a deeper tincture gain.'
 Then in his breast his shining sword he drown'd,
 And fell supine extended on the ground.
 As out again the blade he dying drew,
 Forth sprung the blood, and streaming upwards flew.
 The berries, stain'd with blood, began to show
 A dark complexion, and forgot their snow,
 While, nourished with the flowing gore, the root
 Was doom'd for ever to a purple fruit.

"Meantime poor Thisbe fear'd, so long she stay'd,
 Her lover might suspect a perjurd maid.
 Her fright scarce o'er, she strove the youth to find
 With ardent eyes, which spoke an ardent mind.
 Already in his arms, she hears him sigh
 At her destruction, which was once so nigh.
 The tomb, the tree, but not the fruit, she knew,
 The fruit she doubted for its alter'd hue.
 Still as she doubts, her eyes a body found,
 Quivering in death, and gasping on the ground.
 She started back, the red her cheek forsook,
 And every nerve with thrilling horror shook.
 So trembles the smooth surface of the seas,
 If brush'd o'er gently with a rising breeze.
 But when her view her bleeding love confess'd,
 She shriek'd, she tore her hair, she beat her breast.
 She raised the body, and embraced it round,
 And bathed with tears unfeign'd the ghastly wound ;
 Then her warm lips to the cold face applied,
 ' And is it thus, ah ! thus we meet ? ' she cried,
 ' My Pyramus ! whence sprung thy cruel fate ?
 My Pyramus !—ah speak, ere 'tis too late.
 I, thy own Thisbe, but one word implore,
 One word thy Thisbe never ask'd before.'
 At Thisbe's name, awaked, he open'd wide
 His dying eyes, with dying eyes he tried
 On her to dwell, but closed them slow, and died.
 "The fatal cause was now at last explored,
 Her veil she knew, and saw his sheathless sword :
 ' From thy own hand thy ruin thou hast found,'
 She said, but love first taught that hand to wound :
 E'en I for thee as bold a hand can show,
 And love, which shall as true direct the blow.
 I will against the woman's weakness strive,
 And never thee, lamented youth, survive.
 The world may say I caused, alas ! thy death,
 But saw thee breathless, and resign'd my breath.
 Fate though it conquers, shall no triumph gain,
 Fate, that divides us, still divides in vain.
 " ' Now, both our cruel parents, hear my prayer ;
 My prayer to offer for us both I dare,
 Oh ! see our ashes in one urn confined,
 Whom love at first, and fate at last, has join'd.

The bliss you envied is not our request ;
 Lovers, when dead, may sure together rest.
 Thou, tree, where now one lifeless form is laid,
 Ere long o'er two shall cast a friendly shade.
 Still let our loves from thee be understood,
 Still witness in thy purple fruit our blood.
 She spoke, and in her bosom plunged the sword,
 All warm and reeking from its slaughter'd lord.

"The prayer which dying Thisbe had preferr'd,
 Both gods and parents with compassion heard.
 The whiteness of the mulberry soon fled,
 And, ripening, sadden'd in a dusky red ;
 While both their parents their lost children mourn,
 And mix their ashes in one golden urn."

Thus did the melancholy tale conclude,
 And a long silent interval ensued.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF ALCITHOE AND HER SISTERS
 INTO BATS.

BUT Mineus' daughters still their task pursue,
 To wickedness most obstinately true ;
 At Bacchus still they laugh, when all around,
 Unseen, the timbrels hoarse were heard to sound :
 Saffron and myrrh their fragrant odour shed,
 And now the present deity they dread.
 Strange to relate ! here ivy first was seen,
 Along the distaff crept the wond'rous green ;
 Then sudden, springing vines began to bloom,
 And the soft tendrils curl'd around the loom ;
 While purple clusters, dangling from on high,
 Tinged the wrought purple with a second die.

Now from the skies was shot a doubtful light,
 The day declining to the bounds of night.
 The fabric's firm foundations shake all o'er,
 False tigers rage, and figured lions roar,
 Torches, aloft, seem blazing in the air,
 And angry flashes of red lightning glare.
 To dark recesses, the dire sight to shun,
 Swift the pale sisters in confusion run :

Their arms were lost in pinions as they fled,
 And subtle films each slender limb o'erspread.
 Their altered forms their senses soon reveal'd ;
 Their forms, how alter'd, darkness still conceal'd.
 Close to the roof each, wond'ring, upward springs,
 Borne on unknown, transparent, plumeless wings.
 They strove for words ; their little bodies found
 No words, but murmur'd in a fainting sound.
 In towns, not woods, the sooty bats delight,
 And never till the dusk begin their flight ;
 Till Vesper* rises with his evening flame,
 From whom the Romans have derived their name.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF INO AND MELICERTA TO
 SEA-GODS.

INO, the daughter of Cadmus and Hermione, (and sister of Semele,†) nursed her nephew Bacchus during his infancy, and when that deity's divinity was universally acknowledged and established, it afforded her a source of great pride and triumph. She married Athamas, king of Thebes, and had two sons, Learchus and Melicerta. Her prosperity and happiness, combined with her feelings of exultation respecting Bacchus, roused the indignation and envy of Juno, who determined to put an end to her felicity. For this purpose the goddess descended to the Infernal Regions, and ordered Tisiphone, one of the Furies, to repair to the palace of the king, and to infect him with madness. Tisiphone executed this command so faithfully, that Athamas, in the phrensy with which she inspired him, taking the queen and her children to be a lioness and whelps, pursued them round the palace, and in his fury dashed his son Learchus against a wall. Ino escaped, and threw herself from the top of a high rock into the sea, with Melicerta in her arms. Neptune, at the intercession of Venus, changed them both to sea-deities, Ino under the name of Leucothoe, and Melicerta under that of Palæmon.

* Vesper ; the planet Venus is called Hesperus or Vesper, when it rises after the setting of the sun. The Greeks called Italy Hesperia, because it was situate in the west, or towards the setting sun.

† Semele, the mother of Bacchus.

The power of Bacchus now o'er Thebes had flown :
 With awful reverence soon the god they own.
 Proud Ino all around the wonder tells,
 And on her nephew-deity still dwells.
 Of numerous sisters, she alone yet knew
 No grief, but grief which she from sisters drew.

Imperial Juno saw her with disdain
 Vain in her offspring, in her consort vain,
 Who ruled the trembling Thebans with a nod,
 But saw her vainest in her foster-god.
 "And could," she cried, "my rival's boy have power,
 To make a mother her own son devour ?
 Could he the Tuscan crew to fishes change,
 And now three sisters damn to forms so strange ?
 Yet shall the wife of Jove find no relief ?
 Shall she still unrevenged disclose her grief ?
 Have I the mighty freedom to complain ?
 Is that my power ? Is that to ease my pain ?
 A foe has taught me vengeance ; and who ought
 To scorn that vengeance which a foe has taught ?
 What sure destruction frantic rage can throw,
 The gaping wounds of slaughter'd Pentheus show.
 Why should not Ino, fired with madness, stray,
 Like her mad sisters her own kindred slay ?
 Why she not follow where they lead the way ?"
 Down a steep yawning cave where yews display'd
 In arches meet, and lend a baleful shade,
 Through silent labyrinths a passage lies
 To mournful regions and infernal skies.
 Here Styx* exhales its noisome clouds, and here,
 The funeral rites once paid,† all souls appear,
 Stiff, cold ; and horror, with a ghastly face,
 And staring eyes, infests the dreary place.

* Styx, one of the four rivers which guard the approach to the infernal regions ; the other three are, the Acheron, the Cocytus, and the Phlegethon.

† "Funeral rites once paid." The ferryman of the infernal regions, Charon, admitted into his bark only those whose bodies had been buried, and who paid him a half-penny for their passage ; on this account, the Greeks always placed in the mouth of the deceased, a piece of money to pay his demand, and also a cake composed of honey, flour, &c., with which to appease the fury of Cerberus. The unburied wandered about the shores a hundred years, and were then ferried over.

Ghosts, new-arrived, and strangers to these plains,
 Know not the palace where grim Pluto* reigns ;
 They journey doubtful, nor the road can tell,
 Which leads to the metropolis of hell.
 A thousand avenues those towers command,
 A thousand gates forever open stand ;
 The spacious city worlds of shades receives,
 And space for millions still of worlds she leaves.
 The unbodied spectres freely rove, and show
 Whate'er they loved on earth they love below :
 The lawyers still, or right or wrong support,
 The courtiers smoothly glide to Pluto's court,
 Still airy heroes thoughts of glory fire,
 Still the dead poet strings the deathless lyre,
 And lovers still with fancied darts expire.

The queen of heaven, to gratify her hate,
 And sooth immortal wrath, forgets her state ;
 Down from the realms of day to realms of night,
 The goddess swift precipitates her flight.
 At hell arrived, the noise hell's porter heard,†
 The enormous dog his triple head uprear'd :
 Thrice from three grisly throats he howl'd profound,
 Then suppliant couch'd, and stretch'd along the ground.
 The trembling threshold, which Saturnia‡ press'd,
 The weight of such divinity confess'd.
 Before a lofty adamant gate,
 Which closed a tower of brass, the Furies§ sate ;
 Misshapen forms, tremendous to the sight,
 The implacable foul daughters of the night.
 A sounding whip each bloody sister shakes,
 Or from her tresses combs the curling snakes.

* Pluto, the god of the infernal regions.

† Hell's porter ; the dog Cerberus ; he had three heads according to some mythologists, and fifty according to others.

‡ Saturnia, a name given to Juno, as being the daughter of Saturn.

§ The Furies were three sisters, the daughters of Nox, the goddess of Night. Their names were, Tisiphone, Megara, and Alecto. They were the ministers of the vengeance of the gods, and were always employed in punishing the guilty upon earth, as well as in the infernal regions. They are generally represented with a grim and frightful countenance, in black and bloody garments, and with serpents wreathed round their heads instead of hair ; in one hand they brandish a flaming torch, and a whip of scorpions in the other ; they are attended by terror, rage, paleness, and death.

But now great Juno's majesty was known :
Through the thick gloom all heavenly bright she shone ;
The hideous monsters their obedience show'd,
And rising from their seats submissive bow'd.

This is the place of wo, here groan the dead :
Huge Tityus* o'er nine acres here is spread :
Fruitful for pain the immortal liver breeds,
Still grows, and still the insatiate vulture feeds :
Poor Tantalus† to taste the water tries,
But from his lips the faithless water flies :
Then thinks the bending tree he can command ;
The tree starts backwards, and eludes his hand ;
The labour too of Sisyphus‡ is vain ;
Up the steep mount he heaves the stone with pain,
Down from the summit rolls the stone again ;
The Belides§ their leaky vessels still
Are ever filling, and yet never fill ;
Doom'd to this punishment for blood (they say)
Of bridegrooms slaughter'd on the wedding day ;
Stretch'd on the rolling wheel Ixion|| lies ;

* Tityus, a celebrated giant, was killed by the children of Latona in consequence of having insulted their mother. He was punished in the infernal regions by a vulture preying upon his liver, which was renewed again as soon as devoured. His size was so immense, that when extended upon the ground, he covered nine acres.

† Tantalus, a king of Lydia, murdered his son Pelops, and served his limbs as food to the gods, whose power and divinity he wished to try. For this offence he is punished in the infernal regions with an insatiable thirst, and though placed up to the lip in a stream of water, it flows from him when he bends to taste it ; there also hang above his head delicious fruits, which as he attempts to pluck, are carried beyond his reach by a blast of wind.

‡ Sisyphus, the brother of Athamas king of Thebes, was a celebrated robber whom Theseus slew. After death he was condemned in the infernal regions, to roll to the top of a hill a large stone, which no sooner reached the summit, than it fell back again with impetuosity, thus rendering his punishment eternal.

§ Belides, (or Danaides ;) the daughters of Belus, who murdered their husbands on their wedding day, for which crime they were condemned in the infernal regions to fill with water a vessel full of holes, thereby rendering their punishment eternal.

|| Ixion, a king of Thessaly, having inhumanly murdered his father-in-law, was despised and shunned by all mankind ; Jupiter, commiserating his situation, carried him to heaven ; but shortly after, discovering that he was attempting to gain the affections of Juno, he struck him with thunder, and ordered Mercury to fasten him to a wheel in the infernal regions which was constantly revolving, thereby rendering his punishment perpetual.

Himself he follows, and himself he flies.
 Ixion, tortured, Juno sternly-eyed,
 Then turned, and toiling Sisyphus espied :
 "And why," she said, "so wretched is the fate
 Of him, whose brother proudly reigns in state ?
 Yet still my altars unador'd have been
 By Athamas and his presumptuous queen."
 What caused her hate, the goddess thus confess'd,
 What caused her journey now was more than guess'd,
 That hate, relentless, its revenge did want,
 And that revenge the Furies soon could grant :
 They could the glory of proud Thebes efface,
 And hide in ruin the Cadmean race.
 For this she largely promises, entreats,
 And to entreaties adds imperial threats.

Then fell Tisiphone with rage was stung,
 And from her mouth the untwisted serpents flung.
 "To gain this trifling boon there is no need,"
 She cried, "in formal speeches to proceed.
 Whatever thou command'st to do is done ;
 Believe it finish'd though not yet begun.
 But from these melancholy seats repair
 To happier mansions, and to purer air."
 She spoke. The goddess, darting upward, flies,
 And joyous re-ascends her native skies :
 Nor enter'd there, till round her Iris* threw
 Ambrosial sweets, and pour'd celestial dew.
 The faithful Fury, guiltless of delays,
 With cruel haste the dire command obeys.
 Girt in a bloody gown, a torch she shakes,
 And round her neck twines speckled wreaths of snakes.
 Fear, and dismay, and agonizing pain,
 With frantic rage, complete her loveless train.
 To Thebes her flight she sped, and hell forsook ;
 At her approach the Theban turrets shook ;
 The sun shrunk back, thick clouds the day o'ercast,
 And springing greens were wither'd as she pass'd.
 Now, dismal yellings heard, strange spectres seen,
 Confound as much the monarch as the queen.
 In vain to quit the palace they prepared,
 Tisiphone was there, and kept the ward.

* Iris, the goddess of the rainbow, and messenger of Juno.

She wide extended her unfriendly arms,
 And all the fury lavish'd all her harms ;
 Part of her tresses loudly hiss, and part
 Spread poison, as their forky tongues they dart :
 Then from her middle locks two snakes she drew,
 Whose merit from superior mischief grew :
 The envenom'd ruin, thrown with spiteful care,
 Clung to the bosoms of the hapless pair.
 The hapless pair soon with wild thoughts were fired,
 And madness by a thousand ways inspired.
 'Tis true, the unwounded body still was sound,
 But 'twas the soul which felt the deadly wound.
 Nor did the unsated monster here give o'er,
 But dealt of plagues a fresh unnumber'd store.
 Each baneful juice too well she understood,
 Foam churn'd by Cerberus, and Hydra's blood.
 Hot hemlock and cold aconite she chose,
 Delighting in variety of woes.
 Whatever can untune the harmonious soul,
 And its mild reas'ning faculties control,
 Give false ideas, raise desires profane,
 And whirl in eddies the tumultuous brain,
 Mix'd with cursed art, she direfully around
 Through all their nerves diffused the sad compound ;
 Then toss'd her torch in circles still the same,
 Improved their rage, and added flame to flame.
 The grinning fury her own conquest spied
 And to her rueful shades return'd with pride,
 And threw the exhausted useless snakes aside.

Now Athamas cries out, his reason fled,
 " Here fellow-hunters, let the toils be spread.
 I saw a lioness, in quest of food,
 With her two young, run roaring in this wood."
 Again the fancied savages were seen,
 As through his palace still he chased his queen ;
 Then tore Learchus from her breast : the child
 Stretch'd little arms, and on its father smiled :
 A father now no more, who now begun
 Around his head to whirl his giddy son,
 And, quite insensible to nature's call,
 The helpless infant flung against the wall.
 The same mad poison in the mother wrought :
 Young Melicerta in her arms she caught,

And with disorder'd tresses, howling flies,
 "O! Bacchus, Evøe, Bacchus!" loud she cries.
 The name of Bacchus Juno laugh'd to hear,
 And said, "Thy foster-god has cost thee dear."

A rock there stood, whose side the beating waves
 Had long consumed, and hollow'd into caves;
 The head shot forward in a bending steep.
 And cast a dreadful covert o'er the deep,
 The wretched Ino, on destruction bent,
 Climb'd up the cliff, such strength her phrensy lent,
 Thence with her guiltless boy, who wept in vain,
 At one bold spring she plunged into the main.

Fair Ino's fate touch'd Cytherea's* breast,
 And in soft sounds she Neptune thus address'd:
 "Great god of waters, whose extended sway
 Is next to his whom heaven and earth obey,
 Let not the suit of Venus thee displease,
 Pity the floaters on the Ionian seas.
 Increase thy subject-gods, nor yet disdain
 To add my kindred† to that glorious train.
 If from the sea I may such honours claim,
 If 'tis desert that from the sea I came,
 As Grecian poets artfully have sung,
 And in the name confess'd from whence I sprung."

Pleased Neptune nodded his assent, and free
 Both soon became from frail mortality.
 He gave them form, and majesty divine,
 And bade them glide along the foamy brine.
 For Melicerta is Palæmon known,
 And Ino once, Leucothoe is grown.

THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION OF VENUS RISING FROM THE
 WAVES, IS TAKEN FROM "DARWIN'S BOTANIC GARDEN."

"THE fair Dione,‡ nursed beneath the waves,
 And rock'd by Nereids in their coral caves,

* Cytherea, a name given to Venus from her rising from the Ocean, near the island of Cythera, (now Cerigo, one of the Ionian islands.)

† "My kindred." Hermione, the mother of Ino, was the daughter of Venus.

‡ Dione, a name sometimes applied to Venus.

Charm'd the blue sisterhood with playful wiles,
 Lisp'd her sweet tones, and tried her tender smiles.
 Then, on her beryl throne by Tritons borne,
 Bright rose the goddess like the star of morn,
 When with soft fires the milky dawn he leads,
 And wakes to life and love the laughing meads ;—
 With rosy fingers, as uncurl'd they hung
 Round her fair brow, her golden locks she wrung ;
 O'er the smooth surge on silver sandals stood,
 And look'd enchantment on the dazzled flood.
 The bright drops rolling from her lifted arms,
 In slow meanders wander o'er her charms,
 Seek round her snowy neck their lucid track,
 Pearl her white shoulders, gem her ivory back,
 Round her fine waist and snowy bosom swim,
 And star with glittering brine each beauteous limb.
 The immortal form enamour'd Nature hail'd,
 And beauty blazed to heaven and earth, unveiled."

THE STORY OF PERSEUS.

PERSEUS was the son of Jupiter and Danæ, the daughter of Acrisius king of Argos.* Jupiter being enamoured of Danæ, she was by her father's command imprisoned in a brazen tower, into which the god gained access by converting himself to a golden shower. An Oracle having foretold that Acrisius would be put to death by his daughter's son, Perseus was no sooner born than he was exposed with his mother to the perils of the sea. The slender bark which bore Danæ and her son, was driven by the winds upon the coast of the island of Seriphos,† where they were found by a fisherman, and conveyed to Polydectes, the king of the country, by whom they were treated with the utmost kindness. As Perseus grew up, he gave proofs of great courage, and performed many gallant actions, being assisted and patronized in his undertakings by the gods. The reputation which he acquired, at length excited the jealousy of Polydectes, and in the hope of effecting his ruin, he ordered

* Argos, the capital of Argolis, and considered as the most ancient city of Greece.

† Seriphos, now Serpho ; an island in the Ægean Sea.

him to procure for him the head of Medusa, a task which the king was well aware would expose the hero to many difficulties and dangers. The gods, anxious for the safety of their favourite, armed him with their weapons : Pluto lent him his helmet, which had the power of rendering its wearer invisible ; Minerva gave him her buckler which, was as resplendent as glass ; and he received from Mercury wings, and the talaria, (wings for the feet,) with a short dagger made of diamonds, called herpe. With these arms, Perseus commenced his expedition. Traversing the air, conducted by Minerva, he first alighted at the residence of the Graiæ, (sisters of the Gorgons,) who had only one eye and one tooth between them, of which they each made use in turn. Rendered invisible by Pluto's helmet, Perseus was enabled to steal their eye and their tooth, and returned them only when they had informed him where their sisters, the Gorgons, resided. Having received the necessary information, he flew to their habitation, where, finding the monsters asleep, (and aware that if he looked upon them he should instantly be turned to stone,) he kept his eyes fixed upon his shield, which reflected every object as clearly as the most polished mirror, and with one blow cut off Medusa's head, the only one of the sisters who was mortal. Perseus then continued his flight, bearing in his hand the head of Medusa, the blood of which, falling on the earth, produced the innumerable serpents which have ever since infested the sandy deserts of Lybia, and also the winged horse Pegasus. Pegasus instantly flew to Mount Helicon,* (the residence of the Muses, and whose favourite he became,) where, by striking the earth with his foot, he opened the celebrated fountain Hippocrene. Meantime Perseus continuing his journey, alighted in the territories of Atlas, king of Mauritania, whose hospitality he expected to secure by announcing himself as the son of Jupiter ; but an Oracle having foretold that the gardens of Atlas would be robbed of their fruit by a son of Jupiter, the Monarch not only refused to receive him, but even threatened his person with violence. Perseus revenged this insult by placing before the king the head of Medusa, and Atlas was immediately changed into the mountain which still bears his name. The next exploit of Perseus was the deliverance of Andromeda, a beautiful

* Mount Helicon, a celebrated mountain of Phocis in Greece, sacred to Apollo and the Muses,

maiden, who was exposed to the fury of a sea-monster on the coast of Ethiopia. Claiming her as his bride, (those being the terms on which he undertook her rescue,) preparations were made to solemnize their nuptials, but the festivities were interrupted by the appearance of Phineus, the uncle of Andromeda, to whom she had been promised in marriage, and who now came to contend for her. Perseus, unable to resist the violence of the friends of Phineus by whom he was attacked, had again recourse to the Gorgon head, which on exhibiting, they were all instantly turned to stone, each in the attitude in which he then stood. Perseus now embarked for Greece, accompanied by Andromeda; on reaching the Peloponnesian coast, he was informed that games were celebrating at Larissa, and wishing to signalize himself by throwing the quoit, a game in which he particularly excelled, he repaired thither, where he was so unfortunate as to kill a stranger who was present with a quoit which he had thrown in the air. The stranger proved to be his grandfather Acrisius—and thus was the oracle fulfilled. Perseus refused to accept the throne of Argos, to which he became entitled by the death of his grandfather, and removed to the maritime coast of Argolis, where he laid the foundations of a new city, which he called Mycenæ. After death he received divine honours, and was placed among the northern constellations. Cepheus, Cassiopeia, (the mother of Andromeda,) Andromeda, the head of Medusa, (included in the constellation of Perseus,) and Pegasus, were also placed among the northern constellations. (The head of Medusa was placed upon the Ægis of Minerva, and had the power of turning to stone all who looked upon it. This Ægis was a shield which Jupiter had given to Minerva; it was covered with the skin of the goat Amalthea, fabled to have nursed Jove during his infancy in the island of Crete.)

THE STORY OF PERSEUS.

THE hero Perseus on his journey flies,*
And in a vale which 'neath cold Atlas lies,
Where, with aspiring mountains fenced around,
He the two daughters of old Phorcus† found.

* Perseus, having been ordered by Polydectes to procure the head of Medusa, departs in search of the desired object.

† "The two daughters of old Phorcus." Perseus alighted at the

Fate had one common eye to both assign'd,
 Each saw by turns, and each by turns was blind.
 But while one strove to lend her sister sight,
 He stretch'd his hand, and stole their mutual light,
 And left both eyeless, both involved in night.
 Through devious wilds, and trackless woods, he pass'd,
 And at the Gorgons'* seat arrived at last :
 But as he journey'd, pensive, he survey'd
 What wasteful havoc dire Medusa made.
 Here, stood still breathing statues, men before ;
 There, rampant lions seem'd in stone to roar.
 Nor did he, yet affrighted, quit the field ;
 But in the mirror of his polish'd shield
 Reflected, saw Medusa slumbers take,
 And not one serpent, by good chance, awake.
 Then backward an unerring blow he sped,
 And from her body lopp'd at once her head.
 The gore prolific proved ; with sudden force
 Sprung Pegasus,† and wing'd his airy course.
 The victor Perseus, with the Gorgon head,
 O'er Lybian sands his airy journey sped.
 The gory drops distill'd, as swift he flew,
 And from each drop envenom'd serpents grew.
 The mischiefs brooded on the barren plains,
 And still the unhappy fruitfulness remains.
 Thence Perseus, like a cloud, by storms was driven,
 Through all the expanse beneath the cope of heaven.
 The jarring winds unable to control,
 He saw the southern and the northern pole ;
 And eastward thrice, and westward thrice, was whirl'd,
 And from the skies survey'd the nether world.
 But when gray evening show'd the verge of night,
 He fear'd in darkness to pursue his flight.

residence of the Graiæ, sisters of the Gorgons, who had only one eye and one tooth between them, of which they made use each in turn.

* "Gorgons' seat." The Gorgons were three sisters, the daughters of Phorcus ; their names were Medusa, Euryale, and Stheno, all immortal except Medusa. Medusa was at one period distinguished for her personal charms, and particularly for the beauty and length of her hair, but having offended Minerva, the goddess changed her locks to serpents, and rendered her appearance so frightful, that all who beheld her were changed to stone.

† Pegasus, a winged horse. See story of Perseus, page 86.

He poised his pinions and forgot to soar,
And, sinking, closed them on the Hesperian shore.
Then begg'd to rest, till Lucifer* begun
To wake the morn, the morn to wake the sun.

Here Atlas† reign'd, of more than human size,
And in his kingdom the world's limit lies.‡
Here Titan§ bids his weary coursers sleep,
And cools the burning axle in the deep :
The mighty monarch, uncontroll'd, alone
His sceptre sways : no neighb'ring states are known :
A thousand flocks on shady mountains fed,
A thousand herds o'er grassy plains were spread :
Here wond'rous trees their shining stores unfold,
Their shining stores too wond'rous to be told,
Their leaves, their branches, and their apples, gold.
Then Perseus the gigantic prince address'd,
Humbly implored a hospitable rest :
" If bold exploits thy admiration fire,"
He said, " I fancy mine thou wilt admire :
Or, if the glory of a race can move,
Not mean my glory, for I spring from Jove."
At this confession Atlas ghastly stared,
Mindful of what an oracle declared,||
That the dark womb of time conceal'd a day,
Which should, disclosed, the bloomy gold betray ;
All should at once be ravished from his eyes,
And Jove's own progeny enjoy the prize.
For this the fruit he loftily immured,
And a fierce dragon the strait pass secured :
For this, all strangers he forbade to land,
And drove them from the inhospitable strand.
To Perseus then : " Fly, quickly fly, this coast,
Nor falsely dare thy acts and race to boast."
In vain the hero for one night entreats,
Threat'ning he storms, and next adds force to threats.

* Lucifer, the name of the planet Venus, or morning star.

† " Here Atlas reigned." Atlas, one of the giants, was the king of Mauritania, now Morocco, in Africa.

‡ " The world's limit lies." The ancients knew nothing of Africa, beyond Lat. 10° N.

§ Titan, a name applied to the sun.

|| " An oracle declared." This oracle did not refer to Perseus, but to Hercules, who was also the son of Jupiter, and who some time after robbed the garden of the Hesperides of its golden fruit, it being one of the labours imposed upon him by Eurystheus.

By strength not Perseus could himself defend ;
 For who in strength with Atlas could contend ?
 " But since short rest to me thou wilt not give,
 A gift of endless rest from me receive."
 He said, and backward turn'd, no more conceal'd
 The present, and Medusa's head reveal'd.
 Soon the high Atlas a high mountain stood ;
 His locks and beard became a leafy wood ;
 His hands and shoulders into ridges went ;
 The summit-head still crown'd the steep ascent ;
 His bones a solid, rocky hardness gain'd,
 He, thus immensely grown, (as Fate ordain'd,)
 The stars, the heavens, and all the gods, sustain'd.*

ANDROMEDA RESCUED FROM THE SEA-MONSTER BY PERSEUS.

Now Æolus† had with strong chains confined,
 And deep imprison'd every blustering wind ;
 The rising Phosphor‡ with a purple light
 Did sluggish mortals to new toils invite.
 His feet again the valiant Perseus plumes,
 And his keen sabre in his hand resumes :
 Then nobly spurns the ground, and upward springs,
 And cuts the liquid air with sounding wings.
 O'er various seas, and various lands, he pass'd,
 Till Ethiopia's shore appear'd at last.
 Andromeda was there, doom'd to atone
 By her own ruin, follies not her own :
 And if injustice in a god can be,
 Such was the Lybian god's unjust decree.
 Chain'd to a rock she stood ; young Perseus stay'd
 His rapid flight, to view the beauteous maid.
 So sweet her form, so exquisitely fine,
 She seem'd a statue by a hand divine,
 Had not the wind her waving tresses show'd,
 And down her cheeks the melting sorrows flow'd.

* " The stars, the heavens, and all the gods, sustained." This mountain is so high, that the ancients imagined ~~that~~ the heavens rested on its top, and that Atlas supported the world on his shoulders.

† Æolus, the god of the wind.

‡ Phosphor, the morning star.

Her faultless form the hero's bosom fires;
 The more he looks, the more he still admires.
 The admirer almost had forgot to fly,
 And swift descended, fluttering from on high:
 "O virgin! worthy no such chains to prove,
 But pleasing chains in the soft folds of love;
 Thy country, and thy name," he said, "disclose,
 And give a true rehearsal of thy woes."

A quick reply her bashfulness refused,
 To the free converse of a man unused.
 Her rising blushes had concealment found
 From her spread hands, but that her hands were bound.
 She acted to her full extent of power,
 And bathed her face with a fresh, silent shower.
 But by degrees in innocence grown bold,
 Her name, her country, and her birth she told:
 And how she suffered for her mother's pride,*
 Who with the Nereids once in beauty vied.
 Part yet untold, the sea began to roar,
 And mounting billows tumbled to the shore.
 Above the waves a monster raised his head;
 His body o'er the deep was widely spread;
 Onward he flounced; aloud the virgin cries;
 Each parent to her shrieks, in shrieks replies:
 But she had deepest cause to rend the skies.
 Weeping, to her they cling; no sign appears
 Of help, they only lend their helpless tears.
 "Too long you vent your sorrows," Perseus said,
 "Short is the hour, and swift the time of aid;
 In me the son of thundering Jove behold,
 Who woo'd my mother in a shower of gold:
 Medusa's snaky head is now my prey,
 And through the clouds I boldly wing my way:
 If such desert be worthy of esteem,
 And if your daughter I from death redeem,
 Shall she be mine? Shall it not then be thought
 A bride so lovely was too cheaply bought?"

* Cassiope boasted that she was fairer than the Nereides, upon which Neptune, at their request, sent a huge sea-monster to ravage Ethiopia. The wrath of Neptune could not be appeased only, by exposing Andromeda, (her daughter,) to its fury. Cassiope, after death, was made a northern constellation, still known as Cassiope, or Cassiopeia.

The parents eagerly the terms embrace :
 For who would slight such terms in such a case ?
 Nor her alone they promise, but, beside,
 The dowry of a kingdom with the bride.
 As well-rigg'd galleys, which slaves panting row,
 With their sharp beaks the whiten'd ocean plough ;
 So, when the monster moved, still at his back
 The furrow'd waters left a foamy track.
 Now to the rock he was advanced so nigh,
 Whirl'd from a sling, a stone the space would fly.
 Then, bounding upwards, the brave Perseus sprung,
 And in mid air on hovering pinions hung.
 His shadow quickly floated on the main ;
 The monster could not his wild rage restrain,
 But at the floating shadow leap'd in vain.
 Now the wing'd hero swift descends, now soars,
 And at his pleasure the vast monster gores.
 Full in his back, swift stooping from above,
 The crooked sabre to its hilt he drove.
 The monster rag'd impatient of the pain,
 First bounded high and then sunk low again.
 Now, like a savage boar, when chafed with wounds,
 And bay'd with opening mouths of hungry hounds,
 He on the foe turns with collected might,
 Who still eludes him in an airy flight ;
 And, wheeling round, the scaly armour tries
 Of his thick sides ; his thinner tail now plies ;
 Till, from repeated strokes, out gush'd a flood,
 And the waves redd'n'd with the streaming blood.
 At last the dropping wings, befoam'd all o'er,
 With flaggy heaviness their master bore :
 A rock he spied, whose humble head was low,
 Bare at an ebb, but cover'd at a flow.
 A ridgy hold, he, thither flying, gain'd,
 And with one hand his bending weight sustain'd ;
 With the other, vig'rous blows he dealt around,
 And the home thrusts the expiring monster own'd.
 In deaf'ning shouts the glad applauses rise,
 And peal on peal runs rattling through the skies.
 The saviour-youth the royal pair confess,
 And with rais'd hands their daughter's bridegroom bless.
 The beauteous bride moves on, now loosed from chains,
 The cause and sweet reward, of all the hero's pains.

Meantime on shore triumphant Perseus stood,
 And bathed his hands, smear'd with the monster's blood :
 Then in the windings of a sandy bed
 Composed Medusa's execrable head.
 But to prevent the roughness, leaves he threw,
 And young green twigs, which soft in waters grew,
 There soft, and full of sap ; but here, when laid,
 Touch'd by the head, that softness soon decay'd.
 The wonted flexibility quite gone,
 The tender scions harden'd into stone.
 Fresh juicy twigs, surprised, the Nereids brought,
 Fresh juicy twigs the same contagion caught.
 The nymphs the petrifying seeds still keep,
 And propagate the wonder through the deep.
 The pliant sprays of coral yet declare
 Their stiff'ning nature, when exposed to air.
 Those sprays, which did like bending osiers move,
 Snatch'd from their element obdurate prove,
 And shrubs beneath the waves grow stones above.*
 The great immortals grateful Perseus praised,
 And to three powers three turfy altars raised.
 To Hermes this ; and that he did assign /
 To Pallas ; the mid honours, Jove, were thine :
 He hastes for Pallas a white cow to cull,
 A calf for Hermes, but for Jove a bull.
 Then claims the prize of his victorious deed,
 The fair Andromeda, his promised bride.
 Andromeda alone he greatly sought,
 The dowry kingdom was not worth his thought.

* "So coral soft and white in ocean's bed,
 Comes harden'd up in air, and glows with red."

Coral is formed by lithophites, (worms deriving their name from two Greek words signifying a plant and a stone.) After forming their cells at the bottom of the ocean, they cease to live, and the structures raised by them adhere to each other, which, augmented with sand and other materials washed up by the sea, a mass of rock is at length formed. Successive generations of lithophites erect their habitations upon the rock, and die in their turn, thus increasing, and continually raising higher and higher, the monument of their persevering labours.

"Now in vast shoals beneath old ocean's tide,
 On earth's firm crust testaceous tribes reside ;
 Age after age expands the peopled plain,
 The tenants perish, but their cells remain ;
 Whence coral walls and sparry hills ascend
 From pole to pole, and round the line extend."—Darwin.

Pleased Hymen* now his golden torch displays ;
 With rich oblations fragrant altars blaze,
 Sweet wreaths of choicest flowers are hung on high,
 And cloudless pleasure smiles in every eye ;
 The melting music melting thoughts inspires,
 And warbling songsters aid the warbling lyres ;
 The palace opens wide in pompous state,
 And, by his peers surrounded, Cepheus sate ;
 A feast was served fit for a king to give,
 And fit for godlike heroes to receive.

But now within the palace walls was heard
 The roaring noise of some unruly crowd ;
 Not like the songs which cheerful friends prepare
 For nuptial days, but sounds that threaten'd war ;
 And all the pleasures of this happy feast,
 To tumult turn'd, in wild disorder ceas'd :
 So, when the sea is calm, we often find
 A storm raised sudden by some furious wind.

Chief in the riot, Phineus first appear'd,
 The rash ringleader of this boist'rous herd,
 And brandishing his brazen-pointed lance,
 "Behold," he said, "an injured man advance,
 Stung with resentment for his promised wife,
 Nor shall thy wings, O Perseus, save thy life."
 His lance was aim'd, when Cepheus ran and said,
 "Hold ! brother, hold ! what brutal rage has made
 Your frantic mind so black a crime conceive ?
 Are these the thanks that you to Perseus give ?
 This the reward that to his worth you pay,
 Whose timely valour saved Andromeda ?
 Nor was it he, if you would reason right,
 That forced her from you, but the jealous spite
 Of envious Nereids,† and Jove's high decree,
 And that devouring monster of the sea,
 That ready with his jaws wide gaping stood
 To eat my child, the fairest of my blood,
 You lost her then, when she seem'd past relief,
 And wish'd, perhaps, her death to ease your grief

* Hymen, the god of marriage.

† Nereides, sea-nymphs.

With my afflictions : not content to view
 Andromeda in chains, unhelped by you,
 Her spouse, and uncle ; will you grieve that he
 Exposed his life the dying maid to free ?
 And shall you claim his merit ? Had you thought
 Her charms so great, you should have bravely sought
 That blessing on the rocks where fix'd she lay :
 But now let Perseus bear his prize away,
 By service gain'd, by promised faith possessed ;
 To him I owe it, that my age is blessed
 Still with a child : nor think that I prefer
 Perseus to thee, but to the loss of her."

Phineus on him and Perseus roll'd about
 His eyes in silent rage, and seem'd to doubt
 Which to destroy, till, resolute at length,
 He threw his spear with the redoubled strength
 His fury gave him, and at Perseus struck ;
 But missing Perseus, in the wall it stuck ;
 Who, springing nimbly up, return'd the dart,
 And almost plunged it in his rival's heart ;
 But he for safety to the altar ran ;
 Unfit protection for so vile a man :
 Yet was the stroke not vain, as Rhœtus found,
 Who in his brow received a mortal wound ;
 Headlong he tumbled, when his scull was broke,
 From which his friends the fatal weapon took,
 While he lay trembling, and his gushing blood
 In crimson streams around the table flow'd.

But this provoked the unruly rabble worse :
 They flung their darts ; and some in loud discourse
 To death young Perseus and the monarch doom ;
 But Cepheus left before the guilty room,
 With grief appealing to the gods above,
 Who laws of hospitality approve,
 Who faith protect, and succour injured right,
 That he was guiltless of this barb'rous fight.

Minerva now the hero close attends,
 And with her ample shield from harm defends.
 Perseus begirt, from all around they pour
 Their lances on him, a tempestuous shower,
 Aim'd all at him ; a cloud of darts and spears,
 Or blind his eyes, or whistle round his ears.
 The crowd increasing, and his friends distress'd,
 Himself by warring multitudes oppress'd ;

"Since thus unequally you fight, 'tis time,"
 He cried, "to punish your presumptuous crime :
 Beware, my friends ;" his friends were soon prepar'd ;
 Their sight averting, high the head he rear'd,
 And Gorgon on his foes severely stared.
 "Vain shift !" said Thesculus, with aspect bold,
 "Thee and thy bugbear monster I behold
 With scorn : " he lifts his arm, but ere he threw
 The dart, the hero to a statue grew.
 In the same posture still the marble stands,
 And holds the warrior's weapons in its hands.
 Amphyx, whom yet this wonder can't alarm,
 Heaves at Lyncides' breast his impious arm ;
 But, while thus daringly he presses on,
 His weapon and his arm are turn'd to stone.
 Next Nileus, he who vainly said he owed
 His origin to Nile's prolific flood ;
 Who on his shield seven silver rivers bore,
 His birth to witness by the arms he wore ;
 Full of his sevenfold father, thus express'd
 His boast to Perseus, and his pride confess'd :
 "See whence we spring : let this thy comfort be,
 In thy sure death, that thou did'st die by me."
 While yet he spoke, the dying accents hung
 In sounds imperfect on his marble tongue :
 Though changed to stone, his lips he seem'd to stretch,
 And through the insensate rock would force a speech.
 This Eryx saw, but seeing would not own ;
 "The mischief by yourselves," he cries, "is done ;
 'Tis your cold courage turns your hearts to stone :
 Come, follow me ; fall on the stripling boy,
 Kill him, and you his magic arms destroy."
 Then rushing on, his arm to strike he rear'd,
 And marbled o'er his varied frame appear'd.
 These for offending Pallas were chastis'd,
 And justly met the death they had despised ;
 But brave Aconteus, Perseus' friend, by chance
 Look'd back, and met the Gorgon's fatal glance ;
 A statue now become, he ghastly stares,
 And still the foe to mortal combat dares.
 Astyages the living likeness knew,
 On the dead stone with vengeful fury flew ;
 But impotent his rage ; the jarring blade
 No print upon the solid marble made :

Again, as with redoubled might he struck,
Himself astonish'd in the quarry stuck.

The vulgar deaths 'twere tedious to rehearse,
And fates below the dignity of verse :
Their safety in their flight two hundred found ;
Two hundred by Medusa's head were stoned.
Fierce Phineus now repents the wrongful fight,
And views his varied friends ; a dreadful sight ;
He knows their faces, for their help he sues,
And thinks, not hearing him, that they refuse ;
By name he begs their succour, one by one,
Then doubts their life, and feels the friendly stone.
Struck with remorse, and conscious of his pride,
Convict of sin, he turn'd his eyes aside ;
With suppliant mien, to Perseus thus he prays :
"Hence with the head, as far as winds and seas
Can bear thee ; hence ; O quit the Cephene shore,
And never curse us with Medusa more ;
That horrid head, which stiffens into stone
Those impious men, who, daring death, look on.
I warr'd not with thee out of hate or strife ;
My honest cause was to defend my wife,
First pledged to me : what crime could I suppose,
To arm my friends, and vindicate my spouse ?
But vain, too late, I see, was our design ;
Mine was the title, but the merit thine.
Contending made me guilty, I confess ;
But penitence should make that guilt the less :
'Twas thine to conquer by Minerva's power :
Favour'd of heaven, thy mercy I implore ;
For life I sue, the rest to thee I yield ;
In pity from my sight remove the shield."
He suing said, nor durst revert his eyes
On the grim head ; and Perseus thus replies :
"Coward, what is in me to grant I will,
Nor blood, unworthy of my valour, spill ;
Fear not to perish by my vengeful sword,
From that secure, 'tis all the Fates afford.
Where now I see thee, thou shalt still be seen,
A lasting monument to please our queen ;
There still shall thy betrothed behold her spouse,
And find his image in her father's house."
This said, where Phineus turn'd to shun the shield,
Full in his face the staring head he held ;

As here and there he strove to turn aside,
 The wonder wrought; the man was petrified:
 All marble was his frame, his humid eyes
 Dropp'd tears, which hung upon the stone like ice;
 In suppliant posture with uplifted hands,
 And fearful look, the guilty statue stands.

Hence Perseus to his native city hies,
 Victorious, and rewarded with his prize.

THE MUSES.

THE Muses were the daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne; they were nine in number, and presided over Poetry, Music, and all the liberal arts. Apollo was their patron and conductor, on which account he received the name of Musagetes, or leader of the Muses. Mount Helicon was their favourite residence, and all the fountains of Pindus and Parnassus were sacred to them. They are represented in different attitudes, according to the arts and sciences over which they presided; viz. Clio, (History,) holds in her hand a half-opened scroll; Melpomene, (Tragedy,) is veiled, and leans upon a pillar, holding in her left hand a tragic mask; Thalia, (Comedy,) holds in one hand a comic mask, and in the other a staff resembling an augur's wand; Euterpe, (Music,) holds two flutes; Terpsichore, (the Dance,) is represented in a dancing attitude, and plays upon a seven-stringed lyre; Erato, (Amatory verse,) holds a nine-stringed instrument; Calliope, (Epic poetry,) has a roll of parchment in her hand, and sometimes a straight trumpet; Urania, (Astronomy,) holds in her left hand a globe, and in her right a rod, with which she appears to point out some object to the beholder; Polyhymnia, (Eloquence and Imitation,) places the fore-finger of her right hand upon her lip, or else carries a scroll. The Muses are always represented as young, beautiful, and modest virgins, and sometimes with their hands joined, dancing in a circle round Apollo.

The virgin songsters first beheld the light*
 Near where Olympus† rears his snowy height;

* This poetical sketch of the Muses, is taken from Hesiod's Theogony, with a few verbal alterations.

† Olympus, a celebrated range of mountains on the coast of

Daughters of fair Mnemosyne and Jove,
 (Who woo'd in shepherd's guise the maiden's love) ;
 Immortal nine ! whose bless'd and powerful art,
 Can banish care, and sooth the anxious heart !
 Clio begins the lovely tuneful race
 Which Melpomene and Euterpe grace ;
 Terpsichore, all joyful in the choir,
 And Erato, whose lays to love inspire ;
 To these Thalia and Polymnia join,
 Urania, and Calliope* divine,
 The first, in honour, of the tuneful nine ;
 She the renown of conquering heroes sings,
 And the great deeds of wise and virtuous kings.

MINERVA'S INTERVIEW WITH THE MUSES.

VEIL'd in a cloud, concealed from mortal view,
 O'er hills and oceans fair Minerva flew ;
 Her flight she stay'd on Helicon† to rest,
 And in these words the virgin nine address'd :
 " Me the strange tidings of a new found spring,
 Ye learned sisters, to this mountain bring.
 If all be true that Fame's wide rumours tell,
 'Twas Pegasus‡ discover'd first your well ;
 Whose piercing hoof gave the soft earth a blow,
 Which broke the surface where these waters flow.
 I saw that horse by miracle obtain
 Life, from the blood of dire Medusa slain ;
 And now this equal prodigy to view,
 From distant isles to famed Bœotia flew."

The muse Urania said : " Whatever cause
 So great a goddess to this mansion draws,
 Our shades are happy with so bright a guest ;
 You, queen, are welcome, and we Muses bless'd.

Thessaly, in Greece. The highest summit in the chain (to which the name of Olympus was confined) was fabled to be the residence of the gods.

* "Calliope divine." Calliope presided over Epic poetry.

† Helicon, a celebrated mountain of Bœotia, near the gulf of Corinth. It was the residence of the Muses.

‡ Pegasus, a winged horse. For account, see story of Perseus, page 86.

What Fame has publish'd of our spring is true ;
 Thanks for our spring to Pegasus are due."
 Then with becoming courtesy, she led
 The curious stranger to their fountain's head,
 Who long survey'd, with wonder and delight,
 The sacred water, sparkling to the sight ;
 Their ancient groves, dark grottoes, shady bowers,
 And smiling plains, adorned with various flowers.
 " O happy Muses," she with rapture cried,
 " Who safe from cares on this fair hill reside ;
 Bless'd in your seat, and free yourselves to please
 With joys of study, and with glorious ease."

THE STORY OF THE PIERIDES.

THE nine daughters of Pierus, (of Thessaly,) challenged the Muses to a trial of skill in music, and being defeated, were changed for their presumption to magpies. The subject chosen by the Pierides for their song, was

THE GIANTS' WAR.

THE Giants were men of enormous stature, and endued with strength in proportion to their size ; some, as Cottus, Briareus, and Gyges, had fifty heads and an hundred arms. They conspired to dethrone Jupiter, and attempted to scale the heavens by piling mount Ossa upon mount Pelion.* The deities, alarmed, fled into Egypt, where, to elude the pursuit of their adversaries, they assumed the forms of various animals. Jupiter finally subdued the Giants, and put them to flight, by calling to his assistance his son Hercules.

SONG OF THE PIERIDES.

" Now rises one of the presumptuous throng,
 Steps rudely forth, and first begins the song ;
 With vain address describes the giants' wars,
 And to the gods their fabled acts prefers.

* Mount Ossa and mount Pelion, mountain ranges in Thessaly, Greece. The modern name of Ossa is Kisosovo, or Kisosabos.

She sings from earth's dark womb how Typhon* rose,
 And struck with mortal fear his heavenly foes ;
 How the gods fled to Egypt's slimy soil,
 And hid their heads beneath the banks of Nile ;
 How Typhon from the conquer'd skies pursued
 Their routed godheads to the seven mouthed flood :
 Forced every god, his fury to escape,
 Some beastly form to take, or earthly shape.
 Jove (so she sung) was changed into a ram,
 From whence the horns of Lybian Ammon came :
 Bacchus a goat ; Apollo was a crow ;
 Phœbe† a cat ; the wife of Jove a cow,
 Whose hue was whiter than the falling snow ;
 Hermes to a voracious ibis‡ turn'd,
 And in that form, afraid of Typhon, mourn'd ;
 While Venus from a fish protection craves,
 And once more plunges in her native waves."

THE STORY OF TYPHON.

TYPHON, (or Typhœus,) was a celebrated giant, who had an hundred heads like those of a dragon or serpent. Flames of fire darted from his mouth and eyes, and he uttered horrid yells like the dissonant shrieks of different animals. He was one of the giants who waged war against the gods, and being finally conquered, Jupiter struck him with his thunderbolts, and crushed him under Mount Ætna, in the island of Sicily.

* Typhon, a celebrated giant.

† Phœbe, a name given to Diana.

‡ "Hermes, (or Mercury,) to a voracious ibis turn'd." The ibis, or hawk, was one of the sacred birds worshipped by the Egyptians. Some authors have endeavoured to prove, that the origin of animal worship among the Egyptians, arose from the metamorphoses which the gods underwent when they fled from Typhon to Egypt, and sought concealment from his fury by assuming the forms of various animals ; as, the cat, the goat, the ox, the fish, the crow, and the ibis or hawk, were among the number of birds and animals worshipped by that nation.

SONG OF THE MUSES.

THE Muses select as the subject of their song the punishment of Typhon, and the story of Proserpine.

Calliope* now rose,
With ivy crown'd; she tunes her golden strings,
And to her harp this composition sings:
"Jove on the giant fair Trinacria† hurl'd,
And with one bolt revenged his starry world.
Beneath her burning hills Typhœus lies,
And, struggling always, strives in vain to rise.
Down does Pelorum‡ his right hand suppress
Towards Latium; on the left Pachynum§ weighs:
His legs are under Lilybæum|| spread,
And Ætna presses hard his horrid head:
On his broad back he there extended lies,
And vomits clouds of ashes to the skies:
Oft labouring with his load, at last he tires,
And pours out in revenge a flood of fires:
Mountains he struggles to o'erwhelm, and towns;
Earth's inmost bowels quake, and Nature groans.

THE STORY OF PROSERPINE.

PROSERPINE, the daughter of Jupiter and Ceres, while gathering flowers in the plains of Enna, was seen by Pluto,** who becoming desperately enamoured of her, carried her off forcibly to the infernal regions, of which he made her the queen. Ceres, inconsolable for the loss of her daughter, wandered throughout the world in pursuit of her, and at length arriving at the fountain of Cyane,†† perceived the

* Calliope, the muse who presided over Epic poetry.

† Trinacria, a name anciently applied to the island of Sicily from its three celebrated promontories, (the island itself being of a triangular shape;) ‡ Pelorum, now Cape Faro, at the East, adjacent to Italy; § Pachynum, now Passaro, at the South, and || Lilybæum, at the West.

** Pluto, the god of the infernal regions. He is also distinguished by the names of Dis, Hades, Orcus, &c.

†† Cyane, a fountain now called Pisme, a few miles from Syracuse, in the island of Sicily.

girdle of Proserpine floating on its surface, (Pluto having opened a passage to the infernal regions through this fountain by striking its waters with his trident.) Ceres, ascertaining from the nymph Arethusa her daughter's fate, repaired to Jupiter, whom she entreated to compel Pluto to restore her child. After some hesitation Jupiter promised to grant her request, on condition however, that Proserpine should not have tasted food while in the infernal regions—but alas! her restoration to her mother on these terms was impossible, for while walking in the Elysian fields, she had gathered and eaten the seeds of a pomegranate, a circumstance observed by Ascalaphus only, and for the betraying of which, the indignant queen transformed him to an owl. Jupiter endeavoured to appease the grief and resentment of Ceres, by permitting Proserpine to remain six months of the year with her on earth, and the other six with Pluto in the infernal regions.

Near Enna's* walls a spacious lake is spread,
Famed for the sweetly singing swans it bred;
Pergusat† is its name: and never more
Were heard, or sweeter, on Cayster's‡ shore.
Woods crown the lake: and Phœbus ne'er invades
The tufted fences, or offends the shades;
Fresh fragrant breezes fan the verdant bowers,
And the moist ground smiles with enamell'd flowers:
The cheerful birds their airy carols sing,
And the whole year is one eternal spring.

Here while young Proserpine, among her maids,
Diverts herself in these delicious shades:
While, like a child, with busy speed and care,
She gathers lilies here, and violets there;
While first to fill her little lap she strives,
Hell's grisly monarch at the shade arrives;
Sees her thus sporting on the flowery green,
And loves the blooming maid as soon as seen.
Swift as his thought he seized the beauteous prey,
And bore her in his sooty car away.

* Enna, a city of Sicily.

† Pergusa, a lake of Sicily, near Enna.

‡ Cayster, a river of Lydia, in Asia Minor, whose banks (according to the poets) were much frequented by swans. It is now called *Kitchik Minder*, or the little Meander.

The frightened goddess to her mother cries ;
 But all in vain, for now far off she flies ;
 Far she behind her leaves her virgin train ;
 To them too cries, and cries to them in vain ;
 And while with passion she repeats her call,
 The violets from her lap and lilies fall,
 She misses them, poor heart ! and makes new moan ;
 Her lilies, ah ! are lost, her violets gone.

O'er hills and valleys now grim Pluto speeds,
 By name encouraging his foamy steeds ;
 He rattles o'er their necks the rusty reins,
 And ruffles with the stroke their shaggy manes.
 O'er lakes he whirls his flying wheels, and comes
 To the Palici,* breathing sulph'rous fumes ;
 And thence to where the Bacchiads† of renown,
 Between unequal havens, built their town ;
 Where Arethusa round the imprison'd sea,
 Extends her crooked coast to Cyane ;
 The nymph‡ who gave the neighb'ring lake a name,
 Of all Sicilian nymphs the first in fame :
 She from the waves advanced her beauteous head ;
 The goddess knew, and thus to Pluto said :
 " Farther thou shalt not with the virgin run ;
 Ceres unwilling, canst thou be her son ?
 The maid should be by sweet persuasion won :
 Force suits not with the softness of the fair ;
 For, if great things with small I may compare,
 Me, Anapis once loved ; a milder course
 He took, and won me by his words, not force."
 Then, stretching out her arms, she stopp'd his way :
 But he, impatient of the shortest stay,
 Throws to his dreadful steeds the slacken'd rein,
 And strikes his iron sceptre through the main ;
 The depths profound through yielding waves he cleaves,
 And to hell's centre a free passage leaves ;

* Palici, two deities, sons of Jupiter and Thalia. They were worshipped with great veneration by the Sicilians, and near their temple were two small lakes of sulphureous water, which were supposed to have sprung out of the earth, at the time of their birth.

† "The Bacchiads of renown." A Corinthian family, who in their nocturnal orgies, having torn to pieces Actæon, the son of Melissus, were banished from Corinth, and settled in Sicily, between the promontories of Pachynum and Pelorum.

‡ "The nymph who gave the neighbouring lake a name." Cyane.

Down sinks his chariot, and his realms of night
The god soon reaches with a rapid flight.

THE STORY OF CYANE.

CYANE was a nymph of Sicily, who endeavouring to assist Proserpine when she was carried away by Pluto, the god changed her into a fountain, (now called Pisme,) a few miles from Syracuse.

CYANE DISSOLVES TO A FOUNTAIN.

BUT still does Cyane the maid bemoan,
And with the goddess' wrongs laments her own :
For the stol'n virgin, and her injured spring,
Time to her trouble no relief can bring ;
In her sad heart a heavy load she bears,
Till the dumb sorrow turns her all to tears :
Her mingling waters with that fountain pass,
Of which she late immortal goddess was ;
Her varied members to a fluid melt ;
A pliant softness in her bones is felt ;
Her wavy locks first drop away in dew,
And liquid next her slender fingers grew ;
The body's change soon seizes its extreme ;
Her limbs dissolve, and feet flow off in stream ;
A silver fluid only now remains
Within the channel of her purple veins.

CONTINUATION OF THE STORY OF PROSERPINE.

Now while through all the earth and all the main,
Her daughter mournful Ceres* sought in vain,
Aurora† when with dewy looks she rose,
Nor burnish'd Vesper‡ found her in repose.

* Ceres, the goddess of corn and of harvests.

† Aurora, the goddess of the morning.

‡ Vesper, a name given to the planet Venus, when it rises after the setting of the sun.

At *Ætna*'s* flaming mouth two pitchy pines,
To light her in her search, at length she tines ;
Restless, with these, through frosty night she goes,
Nor fears the cutting winds, nor heeds the snows ;
And when the morning star the day renews,
From east to west her absent child pursues.

What lands, what seas, the goddess wander'd o'er,
Were long to tell ; for there remain'd no more ;
Searching all round, her fruitless toil she mourns,
And with regret to Sicily returns.

At length, where Cyane now flows she came,
Who could have told her, were she still the same
As when she saw her daughter sink to hell ;
But what she knows she wants a tongue to tell ;
Yet this plain signal manifestly gave ;
The virgin's girdle floating on a wave,
As late she dropp'd it from her slender waist,
When with her uncle through the deep she pass'd.
Ceres the token by her grief confess'd,
And tore her golden hair, and beat her breast :
She knows not on what land her curse should fall,
But, as ingrate, alike upbraids them all
Unworthy of her gifts ; Trinacria† most,
Where the last steps she found of what she lost.
The plough for this the vengeful goddess broke,
And with one death the ox and owner struck.
In vain the fallow fields the peasant tills,
The seed, corrupted ere 'tis sown, she kills ;
The fruitful soil that once such harvests bore,
Now mocks the farmer's care, and teems no more,
And the rich grain, which fills the furrow'd glade,
Rots in the seed, or shrivels in the blade ;
Or too much sun burns up, or too much rain
Drowns, or black blights destroy the blasted plain ;
Or greedy birds the new-sown seed devour ;
Or darnels, thistles, and a crop impure
Of knotted grass, along the acres stand,
And spread their thriving roots through all the land.

Then from the waves soft *Arethusa*‡ rears

* *Ætna*, a celebrated volcanic mountain in the island of Sicily,
now called Monte Gibello.

† Trinacria, a name anciently applied to the island of Sicily.

‡ *Arethusa*, a nymph of Elis, was changed to a fountain, whose

Her head, and back she flings her dropping hairs.
 "O mother of the maid, whom thou so far
 Hast sought, of whom thou canst no tidings hear;
 O thou," she cried, "who art to life a friend,
 Cease here thy search, and let thy labour end.
 Thy faithful Sicily's a guiltless clime,
 And should not suffer for another's crime;
 She neither knew nor could prevent the deed:
 Nor think that for my country thus I plead:
 My country's Pisa;* I'm an alien here;
 Yet these abodes to Elis† I prefer;
 No clime to me so sweet, no place so dear.
 These springs, I, Arethusa, now possess,
 And this my seat, O gracious goddess, bless.
 This island why I love, and why I cross'd
 Such spacious seas to reach Ortygia's‡ coast,
 To you I shall impart, when, void of care,
 Your heart's at ease, and you're more fit to hear;
 When on your brow no pressing sorrow sits;
 For gay content alone such tales admits.
 When through earth's caverns I a while have roll'd
 My waves, I rise, and here again behold
 The long-lost stars; and, as I late did glide
 Near Styx, Proserpina there I espied:
 Fear still with grief might in her face be seen;
 She still her fate laments though made a queen;
 Beneath those gloomy shades her sceptre sways;
 And e'en the infernal king her will obeys."

This heard, the goddess like a statue stood,
 Stupid with grief, and in that musing mood
 Continued long: new cares a while suppress'd
 The reigning powers of her immortal breast.
 At last to Jove, her daughter's sire, she flies,
 And with her chariot cuts the crystal skies:
 She comes in clouds, and with dishevell'd hair,
 Standing before his throne, prefers her prayer:

waters sinking through a secret passage in the earth, rose again in the island of Ortygia.

* Pisa, an ancient city of Elis, in Greece.

† Elis, a country of Greece, situate on the western coast of the Peloponnesus.

‡ Ortygia, a small island of Sicily, within the Bay of Syracuse.

"King of the gods, defend my blood and thine,
 And use it not the worse for being mine.
 If I no more am gracious in thy sight,
 Be just, O Jove, and do thy daughter right.
 In vain I sought her the wide world around,
 And when I most despair'd to find her, found.
 But how can I the fatal finding boast,
 By which I know she is for ever lost ?
 Without her father's aid, what other power
 Can to my arms the lovely maid restore ?"

Jove thus replies : " It equally belongs
 To both, to guard our darling child from wrongs :
 But if to things we proper names apply,
 This hardly can be call'd an injury :
 The theft is love ; nor need we blush to own
 The thief, if I can judge, to be our son ;
 Had you of his desert no other proof,
 To be Jove's brother is, methinks, enough ;
 Nor was my throne by worth superior got ;
 Heaven fell to me, as hell to him, by lot :
 If you are still resolved her loss to mourn,
 And nothing less will serve than her return,
 Upon these terms she may again be yours,
 (The irrevocable terms of fate, not ours) ;
 Of Stygian food if she did never taste,
 Hell's bounds may then, and only then, be pass'd."

The goddess now, resolving to succeed,
 Down to the gloomy shades descends with speed ;
 But adverse fate had otherwise decreed ;
 For, long before, her giddy, thoughtless child
 Had broke her fast, and all her prospects spoil'd.
 As in the garden's shady walk she stray'd,
 A fair pomegranate charm'd the simple maid,
 Hung in her way, and tempting her to taste,
 She pluck'd the fruit, and took a short repast.
 Seven times, a seed at once, she eat the food ;
 The fact Ascalaphus had only view'd,
 He saw what pass'd, and, by discovering all,
 Detain'd the unhappy nymph in cruel thrall.

But now a queen, she with resentment heard,
 And changed the vile informer to a bird.
 In Phlegethon's* black stream her hand she dips,

* Phlegethon, a river of Hell.

Sprinkles his head, and wets his babbling lips.
 Soon on his face, bedropp'd with magic dew,
 A change appear'd, and gaudy feathers grew ;
 A crooked beak the place of nose supplies ;
 Rounder his head, and larger are his eyes ;
 His arms and body waste, but are supplied
 With yellow pinions, flagging on each side ;
 His nails grow crooked, and are turn'd to claws,
 And lazily along his heavy wings he draws :
 Ill-omen'd in his form, the unlucky fowl,
 Abhorr'd by men, and call'd a screeching owl.
 Jove, some amends for Ceres' loss to make,
 Yet willing Pluto should the joy partake,
 Gives them of Proserpine an equal share,
 Who, claim'd by both, with both divides the year.
 The goddess now in either empire sways,
 Six moons in hell, and six with Ceres stays :
 Her peevish temper's changed ; that sullen mind
 Which made e'en hell uneasy, now is kind ;
 Her voice refines ; her mien more sweet appears ;
 Her forehead free from frowns, her eyes from tears.
 As when, with golden light, the conqu'ring day
 Through dusky exhalations clears a way ;
 Ceres her daughter's loss no longer mourn'd,
 But back to Arethusa's spring return'd ;
 And, sitting on the margin, bid her tell
 From whence she came, and why a sacred well.

THE STORY OF ARETHUSA.

ARETHUSA, a nymph of Elis and attendant of Diana, returning from the chase, sought to refresh her weary limbs by bathing in the river Alpheus.* The god of the stream became enamoured of her, but she fled from him, and on imploring aid from Diana, was changed by the goddess into a fountain. The Alpheus endeavoured to mingle its waters with hers, but Diana, opening a secret passage under the earth and sea, the fountain of Arethusa disappeared, and

* *Alpheus*, a river of Elis, in Greece ; its modern name is *Rofeo*, or *Rouphia*.

rose again in the island of Ortygia, in Sicily. The river Alpheus still followed, and also rose in Ortygia, whence, as mythologists relate, whatever is thrown into the Alpheus, rises again in the fountain of Arethusa.

Still were the purling waters, and the maid
From the smooth surface raised her beauteous head,
Wipes off the drops that from her tresses ran,
And thus to tell Alpheus' loves began :

" In Elis* first I breathed the living air ;
The chase was all my pleasure, all my care :
None loved like me the forest to explore,
To pitch the toils, and drive the bristled boar.
Of fair, though masculine, I had the name,
But gladly would to that have quitted claim ;
It less my pride than indignation raised,
To hear the beauty I neglected praised ;
Such compliments I loathed, such charms as these
I scorn'd, and thought it infamy to please.

" Once I remember, in the summer's heat,
Tired with the chase, I sought a cool retreat,
And walking on, a silent current found,
Which gently glided o'er the gravelly ground ;
The crystal water was so smooth, so clear,
My eye distinguish'd every pebble there ;
So soft its motion, that I scarce perceived
The running stream, or what I saw believed :
The hoary willow and the poplar made,
Along the shelving bank, a grateful shade.
In the cool rivulet my feet I dipp'd,
Then waded to the knee, and then I stripp'd :
My robe I careless on an osier threw,
That near the place commodiously grew ;
Nor long upon the border thus I stood,
But plunged with speed into the silver flood :
My arms a thousand ways I moved, and tried
To quicken, if I could, the lazy tide,
'There, while I play'd my swimming gambols o'er,
I heard a murmuring voice, and frighted sprung to shore.

* Elis, a country of Greece, situate on the western coast of the Peloponnesus, now the Morea,

'O! whither, Arethusa, dost thou fly?'
 From the brook's bottom did Alpheus* cry.
 Again I heard him, in a hollow tone:
 'O! whither, Arethusa, dost thou run?'
 Frightened I flew, nor could I stay to hide
 My limbs; my robe was on the other side:
 Alpheus follow'd fast.—
 As trembling doves from pressing danger fly,
 When the fierce hawk comes sousing from the sky,
 And as fierce hawks the trembling doves pursue,
 From him I fled, and after me he flew.
 First by Orchomenus† I took my flight,
 And soon had Psophis‡ and Cyllene§ in sight;
 Behind me then high Mænalus|| I lost,
 And craggy Erymanthus,** scaled with frost;
 Elis was next: thus far the ground I trod,
 With nimble feet, before the distanced god:
 But here I lagg'd, unable to sustain
 The labour longer, and my flight maintain;
 He gather'd ground upon me in the chase,
 And left between us but a narrow space.
 Unwearied I till now o'er hills and plains,
 O'er rocks and rivers, ran, and felt no pains;
 The sun behind me and the god I kept;
 But when I fastest should have run, I stepp'd.
 Before my feet his shadow now appear'd;
 As what I saw, or rather what I fear'd:
 Yet there I could not be deceived by fear,
 Who felt his breath pant on my braided hair,
 And heard his sounding tread, and knew him to be near.
 Tired and despairing, 'O celestial maid,
 I'm caught,' I cried, 'without thy heavenly aid;
 Help me, Diana, help a nymph forlorn,
 Devoted to the woods, who long has worn
 Thy livery, and long thy quiver borne.'

* Alpheus, a river of Greece, flowing through Arcadia and El
 its modern name is Rofeo, or Roupbia.

† Orchomenus, now Kalpaki, a city of Arcadia, in Greece.

‡ Psophis, a city of Arcadia, in Greece.

§ Cyllene, a mountain of Arcadia, in Greece.

|| Mænalus, a mountain in the south-eastern part of Arcadia.

** Erymanthus, a mountain chain in the north-west angle of Ar
 dia.

The goddess heard ; my pious prayer prevail'd ;
 In muffling clouds my virgin head was veil'd.
 The river god, deluded of his hopes,
 Searches the gloom, and through the darkness gropes :
 Twice where Diana did her servant hide
 He came, and twice, ' O Arethusa ! ' cried.
 How shaken was my soul, how sunk my heart !
 The terror seized on every trembling part.
 Thus when the wolf about the mountain prowls
 For prey, the lambkin hears his horrid howls :
 The tim'rous hare, the pack approaching nigh,
 Thus hearkens to the hounds, and trembles at the cry ;
 Nor dares she stir, for fear her scented breath
 Direct the dogs, and guide the threatened death.
 Alpheus in the cloud no traces found
 To mark my way, yet stays to guard the ground.
 The god so near, a mortal fear possess'd
 My fainting heart, at every pore express'd ;
 My strength distill'd in drops, my hair in dew ;
 My form was changed, and all my substance new :
 Each motion was a stream, and my whole frame
 Turn'd to a fount, which still preserves my name.
 Resolved I should not his pursuit escape,
 Again the god resumes his fluid shape ;
 To mix his streams with mine he fondly tries,
 But still Diana his attempt denies :
 She cleaves the ground : through caverns dark I run
 A different current, while he keeps his own ;
 To dear Ortygia* she conducts my way,
 And here I first review the welcome day."

THE FOLLOWING VERSION OF THE STORY OF PROSERPINE, IS
 FROM " DARWIN'S BOTANIC GARDEN."

" So in Sicilia's ever blooming shade,
 When playful Proserpine from Ceres stray'd,
 Led with unwary step her virgin train
 O'er Etna's steeps, and Enna's golden plain ;

* Ortygia, a small island of Sicily, within the bay of Syracuse.

Pluck'd with fair hand the silver-blossom'd bower,
 And purpled mead,—herself a fairer flower ;
 Sudden, unseen amid the twilight glade,
 Rush'd gloomy Dis,* and seized the trembling maid.
 Her starting damsels sprung from mossy seats,
 Dropp'd from their gauzy laps the gather'd sweets,
 Clung round the struggling nymph, with piercing cries
 Pursued the chariot, and invoked the skies ;—
 Stern Pluto grasps her in his iron arms,
 Frights with soft sighs, with tender words alarms ;
 The wheels descending roll'd in smoky rings,
 Infernal Cupids flapp'd their demon wings ;
 Earth with deep yawn received the fair, amazed,
 And far in night celestial beauty blazed.

THE STORY OF TRIPTOLEMUS, AND THE TRANSFORMATION
 OF LYNCS.

TRIPTOLEMUS, the son of Celeus king of Attica, was instructed by Ceres in the art of agriculture, of making bread, and of the care of fruit trees. The goddess gave him her chariot drawn by dragons, in which she commanded him to travel over the world, and to impart his knowledge to the rude inhabitants of the earth, who had hitherto lived upon acorns and roots. Triptolemus, in obedience to these instructions, visited the dominions of Lyncus king of Scythia, by whom he was received with apparent kindness and hospitality ; but the monarch jealous of his superior skill, and anxious himself to claim the honour of the discovery, determined to put him to death, and while in the act of attempting the life of his sleeping guest, was changed into a *Lynx*, an animal the emblem of perfidy and ingratitude.

CERES.

FIRST Ceres† taught the labouring hind to plough
 The teeming earth, and quick'ning seed to sow ;

* Dis, a name given to Pluto, the god of the infernal regions.

† Ceres was the daughter of Saturn and Cybele, and the mother of *Proserpine*. She was the goddess of corn and harvest, and first

She first for man did wholesome food provide,
And with just laws the wicked world supplied :*

Now Ceres takes
Her golden car, and yokes her fiery snakes ;
With a just rein, along mid-heaven she flies,
O'er earth and seas, and cuts the yielding skies :
She 'lights at Athens, dropping like a star,
And to Triptolemus resigns her car.
Parent of seed, she gave him fruitful grain,
And bade him teach to till and plough the plain ;
The seed to sow, as well in fallow fields,
As where the soil manured a richer harvest yields.

The youth o'er Europe and o'er Asia drives,
Till at the court of Lyncus he arrives :
The tyrant Scythia's† barb'rous empire sway'd ;
And when he saw Triptolemus, he said :
"How cam'st thou, stranger, to our court, and why ?
Thy country, and thy name ?" The youth did thus reply :
"Triptolemus' my name ; my country's known
O'er all the world, Minerva's favourite town,
Athens, the first of cities in renown :
By land I neither walk'd, nor sail'd by sea,
But hither through the ether made my way ;
By me the goddess who the fields befriends,
These gifts, the greatest of all blessings, sends ;
The grain she gives if in your soil you sow,
Thence wholesome food in golden crops shall grow."
Soon as the secret to the king was known,
He grudged the glory of the service done,
And wickedly resolved to make it all his own.
To hide his purpose, he invites his guest,
The friend of Ceres, to a royal feast,

taught men to plough, to sow, to reap, and to make bread. She is represented crowned with a garland of ears of corn, bearing in one hand a lighted torch, and in the other a bunch of corn or poppies, which were sacred to her. The Eleusinian mysteries were celebrated in honour of Ceres, during the representation of which it was death to speak, or to reveal what passed in the sacred ceremonies.

* Ceres also performed the duties of a legislator, and the Sicilians experienced the advantage of her salutary laws.

† Scythia, a general name given by the ancient Greeks and Romans to a large portion of Asia.

And when sweet sleep his heavy eyes had press'd,
 The tyrant with his steel attempts his breast :
 Him straight a lynx's shape the goddess gives,
 And home the youth her sacred dragons drives.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF ARACHNE INTO A SPIDER.

ARACHNE, a maiden of Lydia, presumptuously challenged Minerva to a trial of skill in weaving. Defeated and insulted by the goddess, Arachne in despair hung herself, and was changed into a spider.

Minerva* thus : " While tamely I commend
 Those who their injured deities defend,
 My own divinity affronted stands,
 And calls aloud for justice at my hands ;"
 Then takes the hint, ashamed to lag behind,
 And on Arachne bends her vengeful mind ;
 One at the loom so excellently skill'd,
 That to the goddess she refused to yield.
 Low was her birth, and small her native town :†
 She from her art alone obtain'd renown.

* Minerva was the daughter of Jupiter, from whose brain she is said to have issued full grown and completely armed. She was the goddess of wisdom, of war, and of arms; the inventress of warlike chariots, spinning and weaving, and the protectress of all the liberal arts. Her worship was universally established, and magnificent temples were erected to her honour, particularly in Athens, of which city she was the tutelar deity. The goddess had the triumph of naming that celebrated city, an honour for which Neptune also contended, but on referring their mutual claims to the gods, it was decided, that the one who should present mankind with the most valuable gift, should be entitled to the desired privilege. Neptune, by striking the earth with his trident, produced the horse, but on Minerva's presenting an olive tree, she was pronounced victorious; the olive, as the emblem of peace, being considered a greater blessing to mankind than the horse, the symbol of war. Minerva is variously represented, according to the characters which she assumes; but usually, as a stern and beautiful virgin, having a helmet on her head, and completely armed. On her shield appears the snaky head of Medusa. Minerva is sometimes called Pallas.

† " Small her native town ;" Arachne was a native of Colophon, a city of Lydia, in Asia Minor.

Idmon, her father, made it his employ
 To give the spongy fleece a purple die :
 Of vulgar strain her mother, lately dead,
 With her own rank had been content to wed ;
 Yet she their daughter, though her time was spent
 In a small hamlet, and of mean descent,
 Through the great towns of Lydia gain'd a name,
 And fill'd the neighb'ring countries with her fame.

Oft, to admire the niceness of her skill,
 The nymphs would quit their fountain, shade, or hill ;
 Thither, from green Tymolus,* they repair,
 And leave the vineyards, their peculiar care :
 Thither, from famed Pactolus† golden stream,
 Drawn by her art, the curious Naiads‡ came :
 Nor would the work, when finish'd, please so much,
 As, while she wrought, to view each graceful touch :
 Whether the shapeless wool in balls she wound,
 Or with quick motion turn'd the spindle round,
 Or with her pencil drew the neat design,
 Pallas, her mistress, shone in every line.
 This the proud maid, with scornful air denies,
 And e'en the goddess at her work defies ;
 Disowns her heavenly mistress every hour,
 Nor asks her aid, nor deprecates her power.
 " Let us," she cried, " but to a trial come,
 And, if she conquers, let her fix my doom."

The goddess then a beldame's form put on ;
 With silver hairs her hoary temples shone ;
 Propp'd by a staff, she hobbles in her walk,
 And, tottering, thus begins her old wife's talk ;
 " Young maid attend, nor stubbornly despise
 The admonitions of the old and wise ;
 For age, though scorn'd, a ripe experience bears,
 That golden fruit, unknown to blooming years :
 Still may remotest fame your labours crown,
 And mortals your superior genius own ;
 But to the goddess yield, and, humbly meek,
 A pardon for your bold presumption seek :

* Tymolus, now Bourdag, a mountain of Lydia, in Asia Minor.

† Pactolus, a river of Lydia in Asia Minor, whose sands were mixed with particles of gold.

‡ Naiads, inferior deities, who presided over springs, rivers, wells, and fountains.

The goddess will forgive." At this the maid,
With passion fired, her gliding shuttle stay'd,
And, darting vengeance, with an angry look,
To Pallas in disguise thus fiercely spoke :

"Thou doting thing, whose idle, babbling tongue,
But too well shows the plague of living long,
Hence, and reprove, with this your sage advice,
Your giddy daughter, or your awkward niece :
Know I despise your counsel, and am still
A woman, ever wedded to my will ;
And, if your skilful goddess better knows,
Let her accept the trial I propose."

"She does," impatient Pallas straight replies,
And, clothed with heavenly light, sprung from her odd dis-
guise.

The nymphs and virgins of the plain adore
The awful goddess, and confess her power :
The maid alone stood unappall'd, yet show'd
A transient blush, that for a moment glow'd,
Then disappear'd, as purple streaks adorn
The opening beauties of the rosy morn ;
Till Phœbus rising prevalently bright,
Allays the tincture with his silver light.
Yet she persists, and, obstinately great,
In hopes of conquest, hurries on her fate.
The goddess now the challenge waives no more,
Nor, kindly good, advises as before.
Straight to their posts appointed both repair,
And fix their threaded looms with equal care :
Around the solid beam the web is tied,
While hollow canes the parting warp divide,
Through which, with nimble flight, the shuttles play,
And for the woof prepare a ready way :
The woof and warp unite, press'd by the toothy sley.

Thus both, their mantles button'd to their breast,
Their skilful fingers ply with willing haste,
And work with pleasure, while they cheer the eye
With glowing purple of the Tyrian die ;
Or, justly intermixing shades with light,
Their colourings insensibly unite.
As when a shower, transpierced with sunny rays,
Its mighty arch along the heaven displays,
From whence a thousand different colours rise,
Whose fine transition cheats the clearest eyes ;

So like the intermingled shading seems,
And only differs in the last extremes,
Then threads of gold both artfully dispose,
And, as each part in just proportion rose,
Some antique fable in their work disclose.

Pallas in figures wrought the heavenly powers,
And Mars's hill among the Athenian towers :
On lofty thrones twice six celestials sat,
Jove in the midst, and held their warm debate ;
The subject weighty, and well known to fame,
" From whom the city should receive its name."
Each god by proper features was express'd ;
Jove, with majestic mien, excell'd the rest :
His three fork'd mace the dewy sea-god shook,
And, looking sternly, smote the rugged rock,
When from the stone leap'd forth a sprightly steed,
And Neptune claims the city for the deed.

Herself she blazons with a glittering spear,
And crested helm, that veil'd her braided hair,
With shield, and scaly breast-plate, implements of war.
Struck with her pointed lance, the teeming earth
Seem'd to produce a new surprising birth,
When, from the glebe, the pledge of conquest sprung—
A tree, pale green, with fairest olives hung.

And then, to let her giddy rival learn
What just rewards such boldness was to earn,
Four trials at each corner had their part,
Design'd in miniature, and touch'd with art.
Hæmus* in one, and Rhodope† of Thrace,
Transform'd to mountains, fill'd the foremost place,
Who claim'd the titles of the gods above,
And vainly used the epithets of Jove.
Another show'd where the Pigmæan dame,‡

* Hæmus, a mountain which separates Thrace from Thessaly. It received its name from Hæmus, king of Thrace, who was changed into this mountain for aspiring to divine honours.

† Rhodope, a mountain of Thrace, and according to the poets, the wife of Hæmus, king of Thrace. She was transformed into this mountain as a punishment for her vanity in comparing her beauty to that of Juno.

‡ Pigmæan dame. Gerana, a princess who governed the Pygmæi, (a nation of dwarfs,) was changed into a crane for boasting herself fairer than Juno. The Pygmæi dwelt in the extremest parts of India, or according to some authors in Ethiopia. They were said to be no more than one foot high, and to build their houses with egg-shells.

Profaning Juno's venerable name,
 Turn'd to an airy crane, descends from far,
 And with her pigmy subjects wages war.
 In a third part, the rage of heaven's great queen,
 Display'd on proud Antigone,* was seen,
 Who, with presumptuous boldness, dared to vie,
 For beauty, with the empress of the sky.
 Ah! what avails her ancient princely race;
 Her sire a king, and Troy her native place?
 Now, to a noisy stork transform'd, she flies,
 And with her whiten'd pinions cleaves the skies:
 And in the last remaining part was drawn
 Poor Cinyras, that seem'd to weep in stone;
 Clasp'd the temple steps, he sadly mourn'd
 His lovely daughters, now to marble turn'd.
 With her own tree the finish'd piece is crown'd,
 And wreaths of peaceful olive all the work surround.

Arachne drew the far famed loves of Jove:
 How through the briny tide, all foaming hoar,
 Lovely Europa on his back he bore.
 The sea seem'd waving, and the trembling maid
 Shrank up her tender feet, as if afraid,
 And, looking back on the forsaken strand,
 To her companions wafts her distant hand.
 Next she design'd Asteria's fabled fate,
 When Jove assumed a soaring eagle's shape:
 In fluid gold to Danæ's heart he came;
 Ægina saw him in a lambent flame:
 He woo'd Mnemosyne in shepherd's make,
 And for Deois was a speckled snake.

All these the maid with lively features drew,
 And open'd proper landscapes to the view.
 There Phæbus, roving like a country swain,
 Attunes his jolly pipe along the plain;

Some assert that they lived in holes under the earth, from which they came out in the harvest time with hatchets to cut down the corn. Mounted on goats and lambs of proportionate stature to their own, they every year made war against the cranes which came from Scythia to plunder them.

"When Cranes invade, his little sword and shield
 The Pigmy takes, and straight attends the field."

* Antigone was the sister of Priam, and daughter of Laomedon, son of Ilus king of Troy. She was changed into a stork as a punishment for her presumption in comparing herself to Juno.

For lovely Isse's sake, in shepherd's weeds,
O'er pastures green his bleating flock he feeds.
Fresh flowers, which twists of ivy intertwine,
Mingling a running foliage, close the neat design.

This the bright goddess, passionately moved,
With envy saw, yet inwardly approved.
The labour'd work, with furious haste she tore,
Nor longer the affront with patience bore :
A boxen shuttle in her hand she took
And more than once Arachne's forehead struck.
The unhappy maid, impatient of the wrong,
Down from a beam her injured person hung ;
When Pallas, pitying her wretched state,
At once prevented and pronounced her fate :
" Live ; but depend, vile wretch," the goddess cried,
" Doom'd in suspense for ever to be tied ;
That all your race, to utmost date of time,
May feel the vengeance, and detest the crime."

Then, going off, she sprinkled her with juice,
Which leaves of baneful aconite produce.
Touch'd with the pois'nous drug, her flowing hair
Fell to the ground, and left her temples bare ;
Her usual features vanish'd from their place,
Her body lessen'd all, but most her face :
Her slender fingers, hanging on each side,
With many joints, the use of legs supplied ;
A spider's bag the rest, from which she gives
A thread, and still by constant weaving lives.

THE STORY OF NIOBE.

NIOBE, the daughter of Tantalus, and wife of Amphion king of Thebes, was the mother of seven sons and seven daughters. In the insolence of her power and prosperity, she insulted Latona, the mother of Apollo and Diana, and refused to offer incense at her shrine. The irritated goddess entreated her children to avenge her injuries, by humbling the pride of her arrogant rival. This they effected by putting to death all the children of the unhappy queen ; her sons expiring by the darts of Apollo, and her daughters by those of Diana. Her husband, also, terminated his

existence, and the wretched Niobe found a refuge from her grief, in the insensibility of stone into which she was petrified.

Arachne's fate, each female tongue employs,
 As through the Phrygian* towns the rumour flies.
 Niobe, who before she married, knew
 The famous nymph, now found the story true ;
 Yet unreclaim'd by poor Arachne's fate,
 Vainly above the gods assumed a state.
 Her husband's fame, their family's descent,
 Their power, and rich dominions' wide extent,
 Might well have justified a decent pride :
 But not on these alone the dame relied.
 Her lovely progeny, that far excell'd,
 The mother's heart with vain ambition swell'd :
 The happiest mother not unjustly styled,
 Had no conceited thoughts her tow'ring fancy fill'd :
 For once a prophetess, with zeal inspired,
 Their slow neglect to warm devotion fired ;
 Through every street of Thebes who ran possess'd,
 And thus, in accents wild, her charge express'd :
 " Haste, haste, ye Theban matrons, and adore,
 With hallow'd rites, Latona's† mighty power,
 And to the heavenly twins that from her spring,
 With laurel crown'd, your smoking incense bring."
 Straight the great summons every dame obey'd,
 And due submission to the goddess paid :

* " Phrygian towns;" Phrygia, a country of Asia Minor.

† Latona, a daughter of Cœus the Titan, was a celebrated beauty, of whom Jupiter became enamoured ; but Juno, jealous of her rival, sent the serpent Python to torment her, and prevailed upon Terra, (the Earth,) to afford her neither resting place nor asylum. Neptune, touched with compassion, raised the floating island of Delos, in the Ægean Sea, whither, in the form of a quail Latona repaired, and there became the mother of Apollo and Diana. Juno discovering the place of her retreat, again renewed her persecutions, and compelled her to fly from Delos. Wandering, with her children in her arms, over the greater part of the earth, she at length arrived in Caria, where exhausted by fatigue and thirst, she implored a draught of water from some peasants who were weeding a marsh, but her request being insolently and rudely refused by these boors, she entreated Jupiter to punish their cruelty and inhumanity, and he accordingly changed them to frogs. Latona, finally, despite the persecutions of Juno, became a powerful divinity, and saw her children, (Apollo and Diana,) receive divine honours.

Graceful, with laurel chaplets dress'd they came,
And offer'd incense in the sacred flame.

Meanwhile, surrounded with a courtly guard,
The royal Niobe in state appear'd,
Attired in robes embroider'd o'er with gold,
And mad with rage, yet lovely to behold ;
Her comely tresses, trembling as she stood,
Down her fine neck with easy motion flow'd ;
Then, darting round a proud, disdainful look,
In haughty tone her hasty passion broke,
And thus began : " What madness this, to court
A goddess, founded merely on report ?
Dare ye a poor pretended power invoke,
While yet no altars to my godhead smoke ?
Mine, whose immediate lineage stands confess'd
From Tantalus,* the only mortal guest
That e'er the gods admitted to their feast.
A sister of the Pleiads† gave me birth ;
And Atlas, mightiest mountain upon earth,
Who bears the globe of all the stars above,
My grandsire was ; and Atlas sprung from Jove.
The Theban towns my majesty adore ;
And neighb'ring Phrygia trembles at my power ;
Raised by my husband's lute,‡ with turrets crown'd,
Our lofty city stands secured around ;
Within my court, where'er I turn my eyes,
Unbounded treasures to my prospect rise ;
With these, my face I modestly may name
As not unworthy of so high a claim.
Seven are my daughters, of a form divine,
With seven fair sons, an indefective line.
Go, fools ! consider this, and ask the cause
From which my pride its strong presumption draws ;

* From Tantalus. Niobe was the daughter of Tantalus and one of the Atlantides, or daughters of Atlas.

† Pleiads. The Pleiades were seven daughters of Atlas, and after death were placed in the heavens, where they formed a constellation of that name. Merope, (one of the sisters,) being the only one who married a mortal, her star became dim and obscure, and hence it was concluded by the ancients that one of the cluster had been lost. (The constellation of the Pleiades is situated in the neck of the Bull.)

‡ " Raised by my husband's lute." Amphion, by the sound of his lyre or magical harp, received from Mercury, is said to have caused the stones to move, and thus to have raised the walls of Thebes.

Consider this, and then prefer to me
 Cœus the Titan's vagrant progeny,*
 To whom, when wandering, the whole spacious earth
 No room afforded for her children's birth ;
 Not the least part in earth, in heaven, or seas,
 Would grant your outlaw'd goddess any ease,
 Till, pitying hers, from his own wandering case,
 Delos, the floating island, gave a place ;
 There she a mother was of two at most ;
 Only the seventh part of what I boast.
 My joys all are beyond suspicion fix'd,
 With no pollutions of misfortune mix'd ;
 Safe on the basis of my power I stand,
 Above the reach of Fortune's fickle hand ;
 Lessen she may my inexhausted store,
 And much destroy, yet still must leave me more.
 Suppose it possible that some may die
 Of this, my numerous, lovely progeny,
 Still with Latona I might safely vie,
 Who by her scanty brood, scarce fit to name,
 But just escapes the childless woman's shame.
 Go then, with speed your laurel'd heads uncrown,
 And leave the silly farce you have begun."

The tim'rous throng their sacred rites forbore,
 And from their heads the verdant laurel tore ;
 Their haughty queen they with regret obey'd,
 And still in gentle murmurs softly pray'd.

High on the top of Cynthus' * shady mount,
 With grief the goddess saw the base affront,
 And the abuse revolving in her breast,
 The mother her twin offspring thus address'd :
 " Lo I, my children, who with comfort knew
 Your godlike birth, and thence my glory drew,
 And thence have claim'd precedency of place
 From all but Juno of the heavenly race,
 Must now despair, and languish in disgrace.
 My godhead question'd, and all rites divine,
 Unless you succour, banish'd from my shrine :

* Latona was the daughter of Cœus the Titan. The Titans were the sons of Cœlus or Uranus, the most ancient of all the gods. They were men of gigantic stature, and endued with great strength.

† Cynthus, a mountain in the island of Delos.

Nay, more, the imp of Tantalus has flung
Reflections with her vile maternal tongue ;
Has dared prefer her mortal race to mine,
And call'd me childless, which, may she repine."

When to urge more the goddess was prepared,
Phœbus* in haste replies : " Too much we've heard,
And every moment's lost while vengeance is deferr'd."
Diana spoke the same. Then both enshroud
Their heavenly bodies in a sable cloud,
And to the Theban towers descending light,
Through the soft yielding air direct their flight.

Without the wall there lies a champaign ground,
With even surface, far extending round,
Beaten and levell'd, while it daily feels
The trampling horse, and chariot's grinding wheels.
Part of proud Niobe's young rival breed,
Practising there to ride the managed steed,
Their bridles boss'd with gold, were mounted high
On stately furniture of Tyrian die.
Of these, Ismenos, who by birth had been
The first fair offspring of the beauteous queen,
Just as he drew the rein, to guide his horse
Around the compass of the circling course,
Sigh'd deeply, and the pangs of pain express'd,
While the shaft stuck, engorged within his breast ;
And, the reins dropping from his dying hand,
He sunk quite down, and tumbled on the sand.
Sipylus next the rattling quiver heard,
And with full speed for his escape prepared.
As when the pilot from the black'ning skies
A gathering storm of wintry rain descries,
His sails unfurl'd, and crowded all with wind,
He strives to leave the threat'ning cloud behind,
So fled the youth ; but an unerring dart
O'ertook him, quick discharged, and sped with art ;
Fix'd in his neck behind it trembling stood,
And at his throat display'd the point besnear'd with blood :
Prone as his posture was, he tumbled o'er,
And bathed his courser's mane with streaming gore.

Next at young Phœdimus they took their aim,
And Tantalus, who bore his grandsire's name ;

* Phœbus, a name given to Apollo.

These, when their other exercise was done,
To try the wrestler's oily sport begun,
And, straining every nerve, their skill express'd
In closest grapple, joining breast to breast,
When from the bending bow an arrow sent,
Join'd as they were, through both their bodies went ;
Both groan'd, and writhing both their limbs with pain,
They fell together, bleeding on the plain ;
Then both their languid eye balls faintly roll,
And thus together breathe away their soul.
With grief Alphenor saw their doleful plight,
And smote his breast, and sicken'd at the sight,
Then to their succour ran, with eager haste,
And, fondly grieved, their stiff'ning limbs embraced,
But in the action falls ; a thrilling dart,
By Phœbus guided, pierced him to the heart.
Now Damasichthon, by a double wound,
Beardless and young, lay gasping on the ground ;
Ilioneus, the last, with terror stands,
Lifting in prayer his unavailing hands,
And ignorant from whom his griefs arise ;
" Spare me, O all ye heavenly powers," he cries.
Phœbus was touch'd too late ; the sounding bow
Had sent the shaft, and struck the fatal blow,
Which yet but gently gored his tender side ;
So by a slight and easy wound he died.

Swift to the mother's ears the rumour came,
And doleful sighs the heavy news proclaim.
With anger and surprise inflamed by turns,
In furious rage her haughty temper burns.
First she disputes the effects of heavenly power ;
Then at their daring boldness wonders more ;
For poor Amphion, with sore grief distress'd,
Hoping to sooth his cares by endless rest,
Had sheathed a dagger in his wretched breast :
And she who toss'd her high disdainful head
When through the streets, in solemn pomp, she led
The throng that from Latona's altar fled,
Assuming state beyond the proudest queen,
Was now the miserablest object seen :
Prostrate among the clay-cold dead she fell,
And kiss'd an undistinguish'd, last farewell ;
Then, her pale arms advancing to the skies,
" Cruel Latona ! triumph now," she cries,

" My grieving soul in bitter anguish drench,
 And with my woes your thirsty passion quench :
 Feast your black malice at a price thus dear,
 While the sore pangs of seven such deaths I bear.
 Triumph, too cruel rival, and display
 Your conquering standard, for you've won the day ;
 Yet I'll excel ; for yet, though seven are slain,
 Superior still in number I remain."
 Scarce had she spoke, the bow-string's twanging sound
 Was heard, and dealt fresh terrors all around,
 Which all, but Niobe alone, confound.
 Stunn'd and obdurate by her load of grief,
 Insensible she sits, nor hopes relief.
 Before the funeral biers, all weeping and,
 Her daughters stood in vests of sable clad.
 When one surprised, and stung with sudden smart,
 In vain attempts to draw the sticking dart ;
 But to grim death her blooming youth resigns,
 And o'er her brother's corse her dying head reclines ;
 This, to assuage her mother's anguish tries,
 And, silenced in the pious action, dies ;
 Shot by a secret arrow, wing'd with death,
 Her salt'ring lips but only gasp'd for breath.
 One, on her dying sister, breathes her last ;
 Vainly in flight another's hopes are plac'd ;
 This, hiding from her fate, a shelter seeks ;
 That, trembling stands, and fills the air with shrieks.
 And all in vain ; for now all six had found
 Their way to death, each by a diff'rent wound.
 The last, with eager care, the mother veil'd,
 Behind her spreading mantle close conceal'd,
 And with her body guarded, as a shield.
 " Only for this, this youngest, I implore,
 Grant me this one request, I ask no more ;
 O grant me this !" she passionately cries :
 But, while she speaks, the destined virgin dies.
 Widow'd, and childless, lamentable state !
 A doleful sight, among the dead she sat ;
 Harden'd with woes, a statue of despair,
 To ev'ry breath of wind unmoved her hair ;
 Her cheek still reddening, but its colour dead,
 Faded her eyes, and set within her head ;
 No more her pliant tongue its motion keeps,
 But stands congeal'd within her frozen lips ;

Stagnate and dull, within her purple veins,
 Its current stopp'd, the lifeless blood remains :
 Her feet their usual offices refuse ;
 Her arms and neck their graceful gestures lose ;
 Action and life from ev'ry part are gone,
 And e'en her entrails turn to solid stone :
 Yet still she weeps, and whirl'd by stormy winds,
 Borne though the air her native country finds ;
 Where high on Sipylus's* shaggy brow
 She stands her own sad monument of wo.
 There fix'd remains upon the bleaky hill,
 There yet her marble cheeks eternal tears distil.

THE PEASANTS OF LYCIA TRANSFORMED TO FROGS.

WHERE Lycia† yields
 A golden harvest from its fertile fields,
 Some churlish peasants, in the days of yore,
 Provoked Latona‡ to exert her power.
 When forced to flee from Delos' friendly shore,
 She in her arms a double godhead bore ;
 And now the borders of fair Lycia gain'd,
 Just when the summer solstice parch'd the land.
 With thirst the goddess languishing, no more
 Her emptied breast would yield its milky store,
 When, from below, the smiling valley show'd
 A silver lake that in its bosom flow'd :
 A sort of clowns were reaping, near the bank,
 The bending osier, and the bulrush dank,
 The cress, and water-lily, fragrant weed,
 Whose juicy stalk the liquid fountains feed :
 The goddess came, and kneeling on the brink,
 Stoop'd at the fresh repast, prepared to drink.
 Then thus, being hindered by the rabble race,
 In accents mild, expostulates the case :
 " Water I only ask, and sure 'tis hard
 From Nature's common rights to be debarr'd :

* Sipylus, a mountain of Lydia, (Asia Minor,) of which place Niobe was a native.

† Lycia, a country in the southern part of Asia Minor.

‡ Latona ; see story of Latona, note, page 122.

This, as the genial sun, and vital air,
 Should flow alike to every creature's share.
 Yet still I ask, and as a favour crave,
 That which a public bounty nature gave :
 Nor do I seek my weary limbs to drench,
 Only with one cool draught, my thirst I'd quench.
 Now from my throat the usual moisture dries,
 And e'en my voice in broken accents dies :
 One draught as dear as life I should esteem,
 And water, now I thirst, would nectar seem :
 O ! let my little babes your pity move,
 And melt your hearts to charitable love ;
 They (as by chance they did) extend to you
 Their little hands, and my request pursue !"

Whom would these soft persuasions not subdue,
 Though the most rustic and unmanner'd crew ?
 Yet they the goddess's request refuse,
 And, with rude words, reproachfully abuse ;
 Nay, more, with spiteful feet the villains trod
 O'er the soft bottom of the marshy flood,
 And blacken'd all the lake with clouds of rising mud.

Her thirst, by indignation was suppress'd ;
 Bent on revenge, the goddess stood confess'd.
 Her suppliant hands uplifting to the skies,
 For a redress to heaven she now applies :
 " And may you live," she passionately cried,
 " Doom'd in that pool for ever to abide."

The goddess has her wish : for now they choose
 To plunge and dive among the wat'ry ooze,
 Sometimes they show their head above the brim,
 And on the glassy surface spread to swim ;
 Often upon the bank their station take,
 Then spring and leap into the cool lake.
 Still, void of shame, they lead a clam'rous life,
 And, croaking, still scold on in endless strife ;
 Compell'd to live beneath the liquid stream,
 Where still they quarrel, and attempt to scream.
 Now, from their bloated throat, their voice puts on
 Imperfect murmurs in a hoarser tone ;
 Their noisy jaws, with bawling now grown wide,
 An ugly sight ! extend on either side ;
 Their motley back, streak'd with a list of green,
 Join'd to their head, without a neck, is seen ;

And, with a belly broad and white, they look
Mere frogs, and still frequent the muddy brook.

THE STORY OF MEDEA AND JASON.

JASON was the son of Æson, king of Iolchos in Thessaly. During his minority, his kingdom had been usurped by Pelias,* his uncle, but on coming of age he boldly demanded the restoration of his rights. Pelias acknowledged the justice of his claim, but avoided an immediate resignation, by urging him to an expedition against Ætes, king of Colchis, for the recovery of the Golden Fleece,† of which that prince had unlawfully acquired the possession. Jason, in pursuance of this object, departed from Greece, accompanied by a number of brave warriors, among whom were Hercules, Orpheus, Castor and Pollux, &c. The name of the ship in which they embarked was Argo, hence they were called Argonauts. On reaching Colchis, Jason immediately repaired to the king, and informing him of the object of his expedition, demanded the restoration of the Golden Fleece. Ætes promised to relinquish it on the following conditions, viz.: that he should tame the brazen-footed bulls which breathed fire; overcome an enormous dragon that guarded the fleece, and after sowing its teeth in the ground, destroy the armed soldiers who should spring up. These hazardous undertakings Jason was enabled to accomplish by the assistance of Medea, the king's daughter, who was enamoured of him, and who, by the power of her enchantments, tamed the bulls, lulled the dragon to sleep, and finally enabled him to carry off the prize. Jason then sailed for Greece, accom-

* Pelias and Æson were twin brothers, the sons of Cretheus, king of Iolchos in Thessaly. Æson succeeded to his father's throne, from which he was soon driven by his brother Pelias.

† The Golden Fleece was that of a ram, and belonged to Phryxus, the son of Athamas, who with his sister Helle, when escaping from the resentment of Ino, their step-mother, were borne through the air on its back. In passing the straits between Europe and Asia, Helle fell into the sea, which was thence called Hellespont. Phryxus arrived safely at Colchis, where he sacrificed the ram to Jupiter, but Ætes, the king of the country, envying him the possession of its golden fleece, murdered him in order to obtain it.

panied by his fair deliverer, whom he married. The return of the victorious Argonauts to their native country was celebrated with great rejoicings, but Æson, the father of Jason, unable to participate in the festivities on account of his age and infirmities, was restored by the power of Medea's enchantments to the vigour and freshness of youth. Medea shortly after repaired to the court of Pelias, and resolving to punish that monarch's usurpation of her husband's throne, she treacherously promised his daughters that she would exercise her magical arts in the renewal of their father's youth and health, (he also being aged and infirm,) and having impressed them with a firm belief both in her power and kind intentions, they were unhappily induced to murder him during his sleep, being assured by the enchantress, that in order to effect the desired renovation, this act was necessary. Medea having now accomplished her object, and gratified her revenge, refused to re-animate the unfortunate Pelias, and leaving his wretched daughters to bewail her cruelty and their own credulity, returned to her husband's dominions. On arriving at Corinth, she found that during her absence Jason had married Glauco, (or Creusa,) the daughter of the king; frantic with rage and jealousy, she set fire to the monarch's palace, in which her rival was consumed, and then murdering in the presence of Jason her own children, she escaped from his resentment by flying through the air in her chariot drawn by dragons. Medea now proceeded to Athens, and shortly after married Ægeus king of that city. About the same time Theseus, the son of Ægeus, repaired to his father's court, but was not at first recognized by the monarch. Medea, aware of his claims, and fearing his power, instilled suspicions into the mind of the king respecting the newly arrived stranger, and it was agreed that he should be poisoned at an approaching festival; but as Theseus was raising the poisoned goblet to his lips, Ægeus recognized him by the sword which he wore by his side, and dashed the cup to the ground. An explanation taking place, the father and son were reconciled; and Medea, to avoid the punishment that awaited her, again mounted her fiery chariot and disappeared through the air.

The Argonauts now stemm'd the foaming tide,
And to Arcadia's shore their course applied;

Where sightless Phineus* spent his age in grief,
 But Boreas' sons engage in his relief,
 And those unwelcome guests, the odious race
 Of Harpies,† from the monarch's table chase.
 With Jason, then, they greater toils sustain,
 And Phasis‡ slimy banks at last they gain.
 Here boldly they demand the golden prize§
 Of Scythia's king,|| who sternly thus replies :
 "That mighty labours they must first o'ercome,
 Or sail their Argo** thence unfreighted home."
 Meanwhile Medea the brave youth admires ;
 And now by reason strives to quench the fires
 That in her bosom glow : but vainly strove ;
 (For weak is reason's voice 'gainst mighty love !)
 "Ah ! wretched me," she cries, "some god withstands,
 And reason's baffled counsel countermands.
 What unseen power does this disorder move ?
 'Tis love,—at least 'tis like what men call love.
 Else wherefore should the king's commands appear
 To me too hard ?—But so indeed they are.
 Why should I for a stranger fear, lest he
 Should perish, whom I did but lately see ?
 His death or safety, what are they to me ?
 Wretch ! from thy virgin breast this flame expel,
 And soon—O ! could I, all would then be well.

* "Sightless Phineus." The children of Phineus being accused by their step-mother of a design upon their father's throne, he deprived them of their sight, for which cruelty he was punished by the gods with blindness, and Jupiter sent the Harpies to keep him in continual alarm, and to spoil the meats that were placed on his table. He was delivered from these monsters by his brothers-in-law, Zethes and Calais, the sons of Boreas. He recovered his sight by means of the Argonauts, whom he had received with great hospitality, and instructed in the easiest and speediest way by which they could arrive at Colchis.

† The Harpies were winged monsters, having the face of a woman, the body of a vulture, and their feet and fingers armed with sharp claws. They were three in number, Aello, Ocypete, and Celeno.

‡ Phasis, a river of Colchis in Asia, flowing into the Euxine, or Black Sea. Its modern name is Faz-Rione.

§ Golden prize, the golden fleece of a ram. See note, page 130.

|| Scythia's king. Ætes, king of Colchis, a country in Asia. The name of Scythia, was applied by the ancients to the greater part of Asia.

** Argo, the name of the ship in which the Argonauts embarked.

But love, resistless love, my soul invades :
 Discretion this, affection that, persuades.
 I see the right, and I approve it too,
 Condemn the wrong, and yet—the wrong pursue.
 Why, royal maid, should'st thou desire to wed
 This youth, and to a foreign clime be led ?
 Thy native land, though barb'rous, can present
 A bridegroom worth a royal bride's consent ;
 And whether this adventurer lives or dies,
 In Fate and Fortune's fickle pleasure lies.
 Yet may he live ! for to the powers above,
 A virgin, led by no impulse of love,
 So just a suit may, for the guiltless, move.
 Whom would not Jason's valour, youth, and blood,
 Invite ? or, could these merits be withstood,
 At least his charming person must incline
 The hardest heart—I'm sure 'tis so with mine !
 Yet, if I help him not, the flaming breath
 Of bulls, and earthborn foes, must be his death :
 Or, should he through these dangers force his way,
 At last he must be made the dragon's prey.
 If no remorse for such distress I feel,
 I am a ~~st~~gross, and my breast is steel.
 Why do I scruple then to see him slain,
 And with the tragic scene my eyes profane ?
 My magic's art employ, not to ~~usage~~usage
 The savages, but to inflame their rage ?
 His earthborn foes to fiercer fury move,
 And accessory to his murder prove ?
 The gods forbid !—but prayers are idle breath,
 When action only can prevent his death.
 Shall I betray my father, and the state,
 To intercept a rambling hero's fate,
 Who may sail off next hour, and, saved from harms
 By my assistance, woo another's charms ?
 While I, not only of my hopes bereft,
 But to unpitied punishment am left.
 If he is false, let the ungrateful bleed !
 But no such symptom in his looks I read.
 Nature would ne'er have lavished so much ~~grace~~grace
 Upon his person, if his soul were base.
 Besides, he first shall plight his faith, and swear
 By all the gods ; what therefore canst thou fear ?

Medea haste, from danger set him free,
 Jason shall thy eternal debtor be ;
 And thou, his queen, with sovereign state install'd,
 By Grecian dames, the kind preserver call'd.
 Hence ! idle dreams, by love-sick fancy bred :
 Wilt thou, Medea, by vain wishes led,
 To sister, brother, father, bid adieu ?
 Forsake thy country's gods, and country too ?
 My father's harsh, my brother but a child,
 My sister rivals me, my country's wild ;
 And for its gods, the greatest of them all
 Inspires my breast, and I obey his call.
 That great endearments I forsake, is true,
 But greater far the hopes that I pursue :
 The pride of having saved the youths of Greece
 (Each life more precious than our golden fleece ;))
 A nobler soil by me shall be possess'd,
 I shall see towns with arts and manners bless'd ;
 And what I prize above the world beside,
 Possess my Jason—and when once his bride,
 Be more than mortal, and to gods allied.
 They talk of hazards I must first sustain,
 Of floating islands justling in the main ;
 Our tender bark exposed to dreadful shocks
 Of fierce Charybdis' * gulf, and Scylla's† rocks,
 Where breaking waves in whirling eddies roll,
 And ravenous dogs that in deep caverns howl :
 Amid these terrors, while I am possess'd
 Of him I love, and lean on Jason's breast,
 In tempests unconcern'd I will appear,
 Or only for my husband's safety fear.
 Didst thou say husband ?—canst thou so deceive
 Thyself, fond maid, and thy own hopes believe ?
 Tear the deceitful mask, and O ! in time
 Discover and avoid the fatal crime."
 She ceased—the Graces now, with kind surprise,
 And Virtue's lovely train, before her eyes
 Present themselves, and vanquish'd Cupid flies.

* Charybdis' gulf ; a whirlpool on the coast of Sicily.

† Scylla's rocks ; a cluster of rocks between Italy and Sicily, immediately opposite Charybdis. Scylla, (say the poets,) was a nymph, who was transformed into these rocks.

She then retires to Hecate's* shrine, that stood
 Far in the covert of a shady wood :
 She finds the ardour of her love allay'd,
 † But, seeing Jason there, again it raged.
 Blushes and paleness did by turns invade
 Her tender cheek, and secret grief betray'd.
 As fire, that sleeping under ashes lies,
 Fresh blown, and roused, does up in blazes rise,
 So flamed the virgin's breast—
 ‡ New kindled by her lover's sparkling eyes.
 For chance, that day, had, with uncommon grace
 Adorn'd the noble youth, and through his face
 Display'd an air so pleasing, as might charm
 A goddess, and a vestal's bosom warm.
 Her ravish'd eyes survey him o'er and o'er,
 As some gay wonder never seen before ;
 Transported to the skies she seems to be,
 And thinks she gazes on a deity.
 But, when he spoke, and press'd her trembling hand,
 And did, with tender words, her aid demand,
 With vows, and oaths, to make her soon his bride,
 She wept a flood of tears, and thus replied :
 " I see my error, yet to ruin move,
 Nor owe my fate to ignorance, but love ;
 Your life I'll guard, and only crave of you
 To swear once more, and—to your oath be true."
 He swears, by Hecate, he would all fulfil,
 And by her grandfather's† prophetic skill,
 By every thing that doubting love could press,
 His present danger, and desired success.
 She credits him, and kindly does produce
 Enchanted herbs, and teaches him their use.
 Their mystic names and virtues he admires,
 And with his booty joyfully retires.
 Impatient for the wonders of the day,
 Aurora drives the loit'ring stars away.
 Now Mars's mount the pressing people fill,
 The crowd below, the nobles crown the hill ;

* Hecate's shrine. Hecate, a name given to Diana, when presiding over enchantments and magic.

† " And by her grandfather's prophetic skill." Ætes, the father of Medea, was the son of Sol, (the same as Phœbus or Apollo,) who presided over augury.

The king himself high-throned above the rest,
With iv'ry sceptre, and in purple dress'd.

Forthwith the brass-hoof'd bulls are set at large,
Whose furious nostrils sulph'rous flame discharge :
The blasted herbage by their breath expires ;
As forges rumble with excessive fires,
And furnaces with fiercer fury glow,
When water on the panting mass ye throw,
With such a noise, from their convulsive breast,
Through bellowing throats the struggling vapour press'd.

Yet Jason marches up without concern,
While on the advent'rous youth the monsters turn
Their glaring eyes, and, eager to engage,
Brandish their steel-tipp'd horns in threat'ning rage ;
With brazen hoofs they beat the ground, and choke
The ambient air with clouds of dust and smoke :
Each gazing Grecian for his champion shakes,
While bold advances he securely makes
Through singing blasts ; such wonders magic art
Can work, when love conspires, and plays his part.
The passive savages like statues stand,
While he their dewlaps strokes with soothing hand ;
To unknown yokes their brawny necks they yield,
And, like tame oxen, plough the wond'ring field.
The Colchians stare : the Grecians shout, and raise
Their champion's courage with inspiring praise.

Embolden'd now, on fresh attempts he goes,
With serpent's teeth the fertile furrows sows ;
The glebe fermenting, with enchanted juice,
Makes the snake's teeth a human crop produce :
Now, from the lab'ring earth, no single birth,
But a whole troop of hardy youths, rush forth ;
And, what's more strange, with martial fury warm'd,
And for encounter all completely arm'd ;
In rank and file, as they were sow'd, they stand,
Impatient for the signal of command.
No foe but the Æmonian* youth appears ;
At him they level their steel pointed spears ;
His frightened friends, who triumph'd just before,
With deep drawn sighs, his desperate case deplore ;

* Æmonian youth. Jason was a native of Thessaly, which was sometimes called Æmonia or Hæmonia.

And where such hardy warriors are afraid,
What must the tender and enamour'd maid ?
Her spirits sink, the blood her cheek forsook ;
She fears, who for his safety undertook ;
She knew the virtue of the spells she gave,
She knew the force, and knew her lover brave :
But what's a single champion to a host ?
Yet, scorning thus to see him tamely lost,
Her strong reserve of secret arts she brings,
And last, her never-failing song she sings.
Wonders ensue ; among his gazing foes
The massy fragment of a rock he throws ;
This charm in civil war engaged them all ;
By mutual wounds those earthborn brothers fall

The Greeks, transported with the strange success,
Leap from their seats the conqu'ror to caress ;
Commend, embrace, and clasp him in their arms,
So would the kind contriver of the charms ;
But her, who felt the tenderest concern,
Honour condemns with secret love to burn ;
Committed to a double guard of fame,
Awed by a virgin's and a princess' name.
But thoughts are free, and fancy unconfined,
And hopes, and visions, crowded on her mind.
To fav'ring powers her silent thanks she gives,
By whose indulgence her loved hero lives.

One labour more remains, and, though the last,
In danger far surmounting all the past ;
That enterprise, by Fates, in store was kept,
To make the dragon sleep, that never slept,
Whose crest shoots dreadful lustre ; from his jaws
A triple tire of forked stings he draws,
With fangs and wings of a prodigious size :
Such was the guardian of the golden prize.
Yet him, besprinkled with Lethæan* dew,
The fair enchantress into slumber threw ;
And then, to fix him, thrice she did repeat
The rhyme, that makes the raging winds retreat ;

* Lethæan dew. Lethe was one of the rivers of hell, whose waters the souls of the dead drank after they had been confined a certain time in Tartarus ; it had the power of making them forget whatever they had done, seen, or heard, in their former state of existence.

In stormy seas can halcyon seasons make,
 Turn rapid streams into a standing lake ;
 While the soft guest his drowsy eyelids seals,
 The unguarded golden fleece the stranger steals ;
 Proud to possess the purchase of the toil,
 Proud of his royal bride, the richer spoil ;
 To sea both prize and patroness he bore,
 And lands triumphant on his native shore.

JASON RESTORED TO YOUTH.

ÆMONIAN* matrons, who their absence mourn'd,
 Rejoice to see their prosperous sons return'd :
 Rich curling fumes of incense feast the skies,
 A hecatomb of voted victims dies,
 With gilded horns, and garlands on their head,
 And all the pomp of death, to the altar led.
 Congratulating bowls go briskly round,
 Triumphant shouts in louder music drown'd.
 Amid these revels, why that cloud of care
 On Jason's brow ? (to whom the largest share
 Of mirth was due)—his father was not there.
 Æson was absent, once the young and brave,
 Now crush'd with years, and bending to the grave.
 At last withdrawn, and by the crowd unseen,
 Pressing her hand (with starting sighs between,)
 He supplicates his kind and skilful queen.

“ O patroness, preserver of my life ;
 (Dear when my mistress, and much dearer wife)
 Your favours to so vast a sum amount,
 'Tis past the power of numbers to recount,
 Or, could they be to computation brought,
 The history would a romance be thought :
 And yet, unless you add one favour more,
 Greater than all that you conferr'd before,
 But not too hard for love and magic skill,
 Your past are thrown away, and Jason's wretched still.

* Æmonian matrons. The matrons of Thessaly; Æmonia being a name sometimes applied to Thessaly.

The morning of my life is just begun,
But my declining father's race is run ;
From my large stock retrench the long arrears,
And add them to expiring Æson's years."

Thus spake the generous youth, and wept the rest.
Moved with the piety of his request,
To his aged sire such filial duty shown,
So different from her treatment of her own,
But still endeav'ring her remorse to hide,
She check'd her rising sighs, and thus replied :
" How could the thought of such inhuman wrong
Escape," said she, " from pious Jason's tongue ?
Does the whole world another Jason bear,
Whose life Medea can to yours prefer ?
Or could I with so dire a change dispense,
Hecate will never join in that offence :
Unjust is the request you make, and I,
In kindness your petition shall deny :
Yet she, that grants not what you do implore,
Shall yet essay to give her Jason more,
Find means to increase the stock of Æson's years,
Without retrenchment of your life's arrears,
Provided that the triple* goddess join
A strong confederate in my bold design."

Thus was her enterprise resolved ; but still
Three tedious nights are wanting to fulfil
The circling crescent of the increasing moon ;
Then, in the height of her nocturnal noon,
Medea steals from court ; her ankles bare,
Her garments closely girt, but loose her hair ;
Thus sallied, like a solitary sprite,
She traverses the terrors of the night.

Men, beasts, and birds, in soft repose lay charm'd,
No boist'rous wind the mountain-woods alarm'd ;
Nor did those walks of love, the myrtle-trees,
Of am'rous Zephyr hear the whispering breeze :

* Triple goddess. Diana is sometimes represented with three heads, that of a horse, a dog, and a boar, and it is hence that she is called by the poets the triple, the three-headed, and the three-bodied Diana. Her distinguishing name under this triple appearance is Hecate, or Trivia, a goddess frequently invoked in enchantments. She was called Trivia when worshipped in the cross ways, where her statues were generally erected.

All elements chain'd in inactive rest,
No sense but what the twinkling stars express'd ;
To them (that only waked) she rears her arms,
And thus commences her mysterious charms.

She turn'd her thrice about, as oft she threw
On her pale tresses the nocturnal dew,
Then uttering thrice a most unearthly sound,
Her bare knee bended on the flinty ground,
" O night," said she, " thou confidant and guide
Of secrets, such as darkness ought to hide ;
Ye stars and moon, that, when the sun retires,
Support his empire with succeeding fires ;
And thou, great Hecate, friend to my design ;
Songs, mutt'ring spells, your magic forces join ;
And thou, O Earth, the magazine that yields
The midnight sorc'rer drugs ; skies, mountains, fields ;
Ye watery powers of fountain, stream, and lake ;
Ye sylvan gods, and gods of night, awake,
And generously your parts in my adventure take.

" Oft, by your aid, swift currents I have led,
Through wand'ring banks, back to their fountain-head ;
Transform'd the prospect of the briny deep ;
Made sleeping billows rave, and raving billows sleep ;
Made clouds or sunshine, tempests rise or fall,
And stubborn, lawless winds obey my call ;
With mutter'd words disarm'd the viper's jaw,
Up by the roots vast oaks and rocks could draw ;
Make forests dance, and trembling mountains come,
Like malefactors, to receive their doom :
Earth groan, and frightened ghosts forsake their tomb ;
Thee, Cynthia,* my resistless rhymes drew down,
When tinkling cymbals strove my voice to drown,
Nor stronger Titan† could their force sustain,
In full career, compell'd to stop his wain ;

* Cynthia, a name applied to Luna, or the Moon, (the same as Diana.) It was supposed by the ancients that magicians and enchanters, and particularly those of Thessaly, had an uncontrollable power over the Moon, and that they could draw her down from heaven at pleasure, by the mere force of their incantations. Her eclipses, according to their opinion, proceeded from thence, and on that account it was usual to beat drums and cymbals to ease her labours, and to render the power of magic less effectual.

† Titan, a name applied to the Sun.

Nor could Aurora's* virgin blush avail,
 With poisonous herbs I turn'd their roses pale ;
 The fury of the fiery bulls I broke,
 Their stubborn necks submitting to my yoke ;
 And when the sons of earth with fury burn'd,
 Their hostile rage upon themselves I turn'd ;
 The brothers made with mutual wounds to bleed,
 And by their fatal strife my lover freed ;
 And, while the dragon slept, to distant Greece,
 Through cheated guards, convey'd the golden fleece.
 But now to bolder action I proceed,
 Of such prevailing juices now have need,
 That wither'd years back to their bloom can bring,
 And in dead winter raise a second spring.

And you'll perform't——

You will ; for lo ! the stars, with sparkling fires,
 Presage as bright success to my desires :
 And, now, another happy omen see !
 A chariot drawn by dragons waits for me."

With these last words she leaps into the wain,
 Strokes the snakes' necks, and shakes the golden rein ;
 That signal given, they mount up to the skies,
 And now beneath her fruitful Tempest lies,
 Whose stores she ransacks ; then to Ossa† flies ;
 • Now Pelion, Othrys, Pindus, Ceta, all,
 To the fair plunderer a booty fall ;
 The tribute of their verdure she collects,
 Nor proud Olympus's‡ height his plants protects.
 Some by the roots she plucks ; the tender tops
 Of others with her culling sickle crops.
 Nor could the plunder of the hills suffice,
 Down to the humble vales and meads she flies.
 Apidanus,|| Amphrysus, a theft sustain,
 Nor could Enipeus' banks untouched remain.

Now the ninth day, and ninth successive night,
 Had wonder'd at the restless rover's flight ;

* Aurora, the goddess of the morning.

† Tempe, a delightful valley in Thessaly, between mount Olympus and mount Ossa.

‡ Ossa, Pelion, Othrys, Pindus, Ceta, mountains in Thessaly.

§ Olympus, a celebrated mountain on the coast of Thessaly. Its highest summit was fabled by the poets to be the residence of the gods.

|| Apidanus, Amphrysus, Enipeus, rivers in Thessaly.

Meanwhile her dragons fed with no repast,
But her exhaling simples od'rous blast,
Their tarnished scales and wrinkled skins had cast.
At last return'd before her palace gate,
Quitting her chariot, on the ground she sate,
The sky her only canopy of state.
Two altars next of grassy turf she rears,
This Hecate's name, that youth's inscription bears ;
With forest boughs and vervain these she crown'd,
Then delves a double trench in lower ground,
And kills a black-fleeced ram, that ready stood,
And drench'd the ditches with devoted blood :
New wine she pours, and milk from the udder warm,
With mystic murmurs to complete the charm,
And subterranean deities alarm.
To the stern king of ghosts she next applied,
And gentle Proserpine, his injured bride,
That for old Æson with the laws of fate
They would dispense, and lengthen his short date.
Thus with repeated prayers she long assails
The infernal tyrant, and at last prevails ;
Then calls to have decrepit Æson brought,
And stupifies him with a sleeping draught.
On earth his body, like a corpse extends,
Then charges Jason and his waiting friends
To quit the place, that no unhallow'd eye
Into her art's forbidden secrets pry.
This done, the enchantress, with her locks unbound,
About her altars trips a frantic round ;
Piecemeal the consecrated wood she splits,
And dips the splinters in the bloody pits,
Then hurls them on the piles ; the sleeping sire
She lustrates thrice, with sulphur, water, fire.
In a large caldron now the med'cine boils,
Compounded of her late collected spoils ;
Blending into the mess the various powers
Of wonder-working juices, roots, and flowers ;
With gems in eastern ocean's cells refined,
And such as ebbing tides had left behind ;
To them the midnight's pearly dew she flings,
A screech-owl's carcass, and ill-boding wings ;
Nor could the wizard wolf's warm entrails 'scape
(That wolf who counterfeits a human shape.)

Then from the bottom of her conj'ring bag,
 Snakes' skins, and liver of a long-lived stag;
 Last a crow's head, to such an age arrived,
 That he had now nine centuries survived.
 These, and with these a thousand more that grew
 In sundry soils, into her caldron threw;
 Then with a wither'd olive-bough she rakes
 The bubbling broth; the bough fresh verdure takes;
 Green leaves at first the perish'd plant surround,
 Which the next minute with ripe fruit was crown'd.
 The foaming juices now the brink o'erswell;
 The barren heath, where'er the liquor fell,
 Sprang out with vernal grass, and all the pride
 Of blooming May. When this Medea spied,
 She cut her patient's throat; the exhausted blood
 Recruiting with her new-enchanted flood;
 While at his mouth, and through his opening wound,
 A double inlet her infusion found;
 His feeble frame resumes a youthful air,
 A glossy brown his hoary beard and hair.
 The meager paleness from his aspect fled,
 And in its room sprang up a florid red;
 Through all his limbs a youthful vigour flies,
 His emptied arteries swell with fresh supplies;
 Gazing spectators scarce believe their eyes.
 But Jason is the most surprised to find
 A happy change in body and in mind;
 In sense and constitution the same man,
 As when his fortieth active year began.

THE DEATH OF PELIAS.

Thus far obliging love employ'd her art,
 But now revenge must act a tragic part.
 Medea then a mortal quarrel feigns,
 And of her Jason's cruelty complains.
 On this pretence to Pelias' court she flies,
 Who languishing with age and sickness lies:
 His guiltless daughters, with inveigling wiles,
 And well-dissembled friendship, she beguiles:
 The strange achievements of her art she tells,

Then from the bottom of her conj'ring bag,
 Takes' skins, and liver of a long-lived stag;
 Set a crow's head, to such an age arrived,
 That he had now nine centuries survived.
 These, and with these a thousand more that grew
 In sundry soils, into her caldron threw;
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 Sprang out with vernal grass, and all the pride
 Of blooming May. When this Medea spied,
 She cut her patient's throat; the exhausted blood
 Circulating with her new-enchant'd flood;
 While at his mouth, and through his opening wound,
 A double inlet her infusion found;
 His feeble frame resumes a youthful air,
 Glossy brown his hoary beard and hair.
 The meager paleness from his aspect fled,
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With Æson's cure, and long on that she dwells,
 Till them to firm persuasion she has won,
 The same for their old father may be done :
 For him they court her to employ her skill,
 And put upon the cure what price she will.
 At first she's mute, and with a grave pretence
 Of difficulty, holds them in suspense ;
 Then promises ; and bids them from the fold
 Choose out a ram, the most infirm and old ;
 That so by facts their doubts may be removed,
 And first on him the operation proved.

A wreath-horn'd ram is brought, so far o'ergrown
 With years, his age was to that age unknown ;
 Of sense too dull the piercing point to feel,
 And scarce sufficient blood to stain the steel.
 His carcass she into a caldron threw
 With drugs whose vital qualities she knew :
 His limbs grow less, he casts his horns and years,
 And tender bleatings strike their wond'ring ears.
 Then instantly leaps forth a frisking lamb,
 That seeks (too young to graze) a suckling dam.
 The sisters, thus confirm'd with the success,
 Her promise with renew'd entreaty press.
 To countenance the cheat, three nights and days
 Before experiment the enchantress stays ;
 Then into limpid water, from the springs,
 Woods and ingredients of no force she flings ;
 With antique ceremonies for pretence,
 And rambling rhymes without a word of sense.

Meanwhile the king, with all his guards, lay bound
 In magic sleep, scarce that of death so sound ;
 The daughters now are by the sorc'ress led
 Into his chamber, and surround his bed.
 " Your father's health's concern'd, and can ye stay ?
 Unnatural nymphs, why this unkind delay ?
 Unsheath your swords, dismiss his lifeless blood,
 And I'll recruit it with a vital flood.
 Your father's life and health are in your hand,
 And can ye thus like idle gazers stand ?
 Unless you are of common sense bereft,
 If yet one spark of piety is left,
 Despatch a father's cure, and disengage
 The monarch from his toilsome load of age :

Come, drench your weapons in his aged gore ;
"Tis charity to wound, when wounding will restore."

Thus urged, the poor deluded maids proceed,
Betray'd by zeal to an inhuman deed,
And, in compassion, make a father bleed.
Yes, she who had the kindest, tend'rest heart,
Is foremost to perform the bloody part.

Yet, though to act the butchery betray'd,
They could not bear to see the wounds they made ;
With looks averted, backward they advance,
Then strike and stab, and leave the blows to chance.

Waking in consternation, he essays
(Welt'ring in blood) his feeble arms to raise,
Environ'd with so many swords. "From whence
This barb'rous usage ? what is my offence ?
What fatal fury, what infernal charm,
'Gainst a kind father does his daughters arm ?"

Hearing his voice, as thunderstruck, they stopp'd,
Their resolution and their weapons dropp'd ;
Medea then the mortal blow bestows,
And, that perform'd, the tragic scene to close,
His corpse into the boiling caldron throws.

Then, dreading the revenge that must ensue,
High mounted on her dragon car she flew ;
Her harness'd dragons now direct she drives
For Corinth, and at Corinth she arrives ;
But here Medea finds her place supplied,
During her absence, by another bride.
And, hopeless to recover her lost game,
She sets both bride and palace in a flame :
Nor could a rival's death her wrath assuage,
Nor stopp'd at Creon's* family her rage :
She murders her own infants, in despite
To faithless Jason, and in Jason's sight ;
Yet ere his sword could reach her, up she springs,
Securely mounted on her dragon's wings.

From hence to Athens she directs her flight,
And soon the far-famed city stands in sight.

* Creon's family. Jason had married Glauce, or Creusa, the daughter of Creon, king of Corinth.

Here Ægeus so engaging she address'd,
That first he treats her like a royal guest,
Then takes the sorc'ress for his wedded wife ;
The only blemish of his prudent life.

Meanwhile his son,* from actions of renown,
Arrives at court, but to his sire unknown.
Medea, to despatch a dangerous heir,
(She knew him,) did a pois'nous draught prepare ;
The pious father, by her wheedles won,
Presents the deadly potion to his son,
Who with the same assurance takes the cup,
And to the monarch's health had drunk it up :
But in the very instant he applied
The goblet to his lips, old Ægeus spied
The iv'ry hilted sword that graced his side.
That certain signal of his son he knew,
And snatch'd the bowl away ; the sword he drew ;
Resolved, for such a son's endangered life,
To sacrifice his most perfidious wife.
Revenge is swift ; but her more active charms
A whirlwind raised, that snatch'd her from his arms ;
While conjured clouds their baffled sense surprise,
She vanishes from their deluded eyes,
And through the hurricane triumphant flies.

THE STORY OF THESEUS.

THESEUS was the son of Ægeus, king of Athens, and Æthra, the daughter of Pittheus, king of Træzene. During his infancy he resided at the court of his maternal grandfather, but when arrived at years of maturity, his mother urged him to repair to his father's court, and there to claim his protection by exhibiting to him an ivory-hilted sword, formerly belonging to Ægeus, but which, on parting with Æthra, he had desired might be given to his son, and by which token he promised, at any future day, to extend to him his countenance and paternal care. The road leading from Træzene to Athens was infested by robbers and wild

* "Meanwhile his son." Theseus was the son of Ægeus.

beasts, and Theseus, anxious to signalize himself, destroyed them all. He slew Corynetes, a celebrated robber and son of Vulcan; destroyed the boar of Cromyon called Phæa; put to death the famous robber Procrustes, who endeavoured to reduce all strangers to the length of his bed, by cutting off the legs of those who were taller, and stretching the limbs of those who were shorter; he overcame Cercyon, king of Eleusis, a formidable wrestler, who, compelling all strangers to wrestle with him, put them to death after having conquered them. He challenged Theseus, who, defeating him, caused him to experience the same fate he had inflicted on others. He destroyed Scinis, (or Sinis,) a cruel robber, who fastened men to the boughs of trees brought forcibly together, and which he afterwards loosened, so that their limbs were torn violently asunder. Theseus also overcame Sciron, a thief of Attica, who, after plundering the inhabitants of the country, and compelling them to wait upon him and to wash his feet, threw them from the highest rocks into the sea. Theseus inflicted on him the same punishment, but both the earth and sea refused to receive his bones, which were at length changed into large rocks called Scironia Saxa, situate between Megara and Corinth. Theseus arrived at Athens shortly after the marriage of Ægeus and Medea; he was not at first recognized by his father, but Medea, aware of his relationship and claims, attempted to poison him at an entertainment given in his honour, but as he was raising the poisoned goblet to his lips, Ægeus perceiving the sword which he wore by his side, (and by which token he knew him to be his son,) dashed the cup to the ground. An explanation taking place, Ægeus publicly acknowledged Theseus as his son and successor. The next exploit which Theseus performed, was the taking alive a wild bull, which ravaged the plains of Marathon, and after leading it in triumph through the streets of Athens, he sacrificed it to Minerva. He then immortalized his name by relieving his country from a dreadful tribute imposed upon it by Minos, king of Crete. That monarch having declared war against Athens, to revenge the death of his son Androgeus,* who had been assassinated by the orders of Ægeus, peace

* Androgeus, the son of Minos, was famous for his skill in wrestling. He overcame every antagonist at Athens, and became such a favourite of the people, that Ægeus, jealous of his popularity, caused him to be assassinated.

was re-established, on condition only, that the Athenians should send annually seven youths, and as many maidens, to be devoured by the Minotaur, a monster half man and half bull, which was confined in the labyrinth of Crete. The victims were chosen by lot, but Theseus voluntarily offered himself as one of the number. On arriving at Crete, he succeeded in gaining the affections of Ariadne, the daughter of king Minos, who gave him a clew of thread, by means of which, after killing the Minotaur, he extricated himself from the intricate windings of the labyrinth. He now sailed for Greece, accompanied by the six youths and seven maidens, whom his victory had redeemed from death; he was also accompanied by Ariadne, whom he married, but he had the cruelty to abandon her on the island of Naxos, whither he was driven by the winds. The rejoicings which the arrival of Theseus would otherwise have occasioned at Athens, were prevented by the death of Ægeus, who threw himself into the sea,* when he saw at a distance his son's ship returning with black sails, the signal of ill success; Theseus having promised his father, that if victorious, he would exchange them for white, but which promise he forgot to fulfil. Theseus now succeeded to the throne of his father, and governed his subjects with great mildness and wisdom. He continued to distinguish himself by many daring and gallant exploits; among others, he overcame the Centaurs,† (a people of Thessaly, half men and half horses,) who at the nuptials of his friend Pirithous, had insulted the bride Hippodamia, and her companions. He put to death the celebrated robber Sisyphus, who was condemned in the infernal regions to roll to the top of a hill a large stone, which no sooner reached the summit, than it fell back again with impetuosity, thereby rendering his punishment eternal. Theseus forcibly carried away the celebrated Helen, (then very young, daughter of Tyndarus, and afterwards the wife of Menelaus,) but was compelled to restore her to her in-

* Ægeus threw himself into that part of the sea, named from him, the Ægean Sea.

† Centaurs; the fable of the existence of the Centaurs arose from the ancient people of Thessaly having at an early period tamed horses; and being seen by their neighbours at a distance mounted on horse-back, (a sight uncommon at that time,) they were supposed to be a people half man and half horse.

sensed brothers Castor and Pollux ; * he assisted Pir-
 hous in his attempt to carry off Proserpine from the in-
 fernal regions, but failing in their enterprise, they were im-
 prisoned by Pluto, and at length released from their con-
 finement by Hercules, when he descended to the infernal
 regions to steal the dog Cerberus. (Theseus is supposed
 to have lived about 1235 years B. C.)

Egeus now, although o'erjoy'd to find
 His son was safe, yet, bearing still : and
 The mischief by his treach'rous Queen design'd,
 The horror of the deed, and then how near
 The danger drew, he stands congeal'd with fear.
 But soon that fear into devotion turns ;
 With grateful incense every altar burns ;
 Proud victims, and unconscious of their fate,
 Stalk to the temple, there to die in state.
 In Athens never had a day been found,
 For mirth, like that grand festival renown'd.
 Promiscuously the peers and people dine,
 Promiscuously their thankful voices join
 In songs of wit, sublimed by sprightly wine :
 To list'ning spheres their joint applause they raise,
 And thus resound their matchless Theseus' praise :

* Castor and Pollux were twin brothers, the sons of Jupiter and
 Leda, and remarkable for the love which they bore each other.
 Castor was mortal like his mother, but Pollux inherited his father's
 immortality. Castor being slain in a dispute, was, at his brother's
 intercession, allowed to share his immortality, and consequently, as
 long as the one was upon earth, so long was the other detained in the
 infernal regions, and they thus alternately lived and died every day,
 or according to some, every six months. This act of fraternal love,
 Jupiter rewarded by making the two brothers constellations in
 heaven, under the name of Gemini, which never appear together, but
 when one rises, the other sets, and so on alternately. They are gen-
 erally represented riding side by side on white horses, armed with
 spear ; and above their heads appears a glittering star. (Leda,
 the mother of Castor and Pollux, was also the mother of the celebra-
 ted Helen, who was the cause of the Trojan war.)

SONG IN PRAISE OF THESEUS.

GREAT Theseus! thee the Marathonian plain*
 Admires, and wears with pride the noble stain
 Of the dire monster's blood by valiant Theseus slain :
 That now Cromyon's† swains in safety sow
 And reap their fertile field, to thee they owe :
 By thee the infested Epidaurian coast‡
 Was clear'd, and now can a free commerce boast :
 The traveller his journey can pursue,
 With pleasure the late dreaded valley view,
 And cry, " Here Theseus the great robber§ slew :
 Cephisus' flood cries to his rescued shore,
 " The merciless Procrustes|| is no more :"
 In peace, Eleusis, Ceres' rites renew
 Since Theseus' sword the fierce Cercyon** slew :
 By him the torturer Scinist†† was destroy'd,
 Of strength, (but strength to barb'rous use employ'd,)
 That tops of tallest pines to earth could bend,
 And thus in pieces wretched captives rend :
 Inhuman Sciron‡‡ now has breathed his last,

* Marathonian plain. Theseus destroyed a wild bull which ravaged the plains of Marathon.

† "Cromyon's swains." Theseus slew the boar of Cromyon, called Phæa. Cromyon was a small place in Corinthia. Some suppose Phæa to have been an artful female, who enticed strangers to their destruction.

‡ "By thee the Epidaurian coast was cleared." Theseus destroyed the pirates who infested the neighbouring coasts.

§ "The great robber slew." Theseus put to death Corynetes, a celebrated robber, and son of Vulcan.

|| "The merciless Procrustes." Procrustes was a robber of Attica, who was killed by Theseus near the Cephisus. He reduced all strangers to the length of his bed, by cutting off the legs of those who were taller, and by stretching the limbs of those who were shorter.

** Cercyon was a celebrated wrestler whom Theseus overcame. He was king of Eleusis, a city of Attica, famous for its celebration of the Eleusynian mysteries in honour of Ceres.

†† Scinist, (or Sinis,) a cruel robber, whom Theseus destroyed. He tied men to the boughs of trees which he had forcibly brought together, and which he afterwards loosened, so that their limbs were torn violently asunder.

‡‡ Sciron was a thief of Attica, who, after plundering strangers, and compelling them to wait upon him and to wash his feet, threw them from the tops of the highest rocks into the sea. Theseus having conquered him, inflicted the same punishment on him; but neither

And now Alcatho's road's securely pass'd ;
 By Theseus slain, and thrown into the deep ;
 But earth nor sea his scatter'd bones would keep,
 Which after floating long, a rock became,
 Still infamous with Sciron's hated name.
 When Fame to count thy acts and years proceeds,
 Thy years appear but ciphers to thy deeds.
 For thee, brave youth, as for our commonwealth,
 We pray, and drink, in yours, the public health :
 Your praise the senate and plebeians sing ;
 With your loved name the court and cottage ring ;
 You make our shepherds and our sailors glad ;
 And not a house in this vast city's sad."

But mortal bliss will never come sincere :
 Pleasure may lead, but grief brings up the rear :
 While, for his son's arrival, rev'lling joy
 Ægeus and all his subjects does employ ;
 While they for only costly feasts prepare,
 His neighb'ring monarch, Minos, threatens war :
 Weak in land forces, nor by sea more strong,
 But powerful in a deep-resented wrong ;
 For a son's murder,* arm'd with pious rage,
 He now determines deadly war to wage.

THE STORY OF NISUS AND SCYLLA.

SCYLLA, the daughter of Nisus, king of Megara, became enamoured of Minos, king of Crete, while he was besieging her father's dominions ; and as an oracle had foretold that the safety and prosperity of Megara depended on the preservation of a lock of purple or yellow hair, which grew upon the head of Nisus, she hoped to obtain the love and gratitude of Minos, by presenting him with this pledge of victory. Having cut the fatal lock from her father's head

the earth nor sea would receive his bones, which after remaining for some time suspended in the air, were at length changed into large rocks called Scironia Saxa, situate between Megara, (or Alcathoe, as Megara is sometimes called,) and Corinth.

* "For a son's murder." Androgeus, the son of Minos, was put to death by Ægeus, king of Athens.

while he slept, she repaired with it to the tent of Minos; but that monarch, shocked at her unnatural conduct, treated her with the scorn and contempt she merited. The town was however immediately taken by the Cretans, and Scylla, in despair at her rejection by Minos, threw herself into the sea, and was changed to a lark; Nisus, to avoid falling into the hands of the enemy, destroyed himself, and was transformed to a hawk.

And now king Minos,* on the Attic strand,
Displays his martial skill, and wastes the land :
His army lies encamp'd upon the plains
Before Alcatheo's† walls, where Nisus reigns,
On whose gray head a lock of purple hue,
The strength and fortune of his kingdom, grew.

Six moons were gone and past, when still from far
Victoria hover'd o'er the doubtful war.

So long, to both inclin'd, the impartial maid
Between them both her equal wings display'd.

High on the walls, by Phœbus‡ vocal made,
A turret of the palace raised its head ;
And where the god his tuneful harp resign'd,
The sound within the stones still lay enshrined :
Hither the daughter of the purple king
Ascended oft, to hear its music ring,
And, striking with a pebble, would release
The enchanted notes, in times of happy peace.
But now from thence the curious maid beheld
Rough feats of arms, and combats of the field ;
And, since the siege was long, had learn'd the name
Of every chief, his character, and fame ;
Their arms, their horse, their quiver, she descried,
Nor could the dress of war the warrior hide.

Europa's son she knew above the rest,
And more than well became a virgin breast.

* Minos, king of Crete, was the son of Jupiter and Europa.

† Alcatheo, a name applied to Megara, a city of Greece, situate west of Attica.

‡ Phœbus, or Apollo, is said to have assisted in building the walls of Megara. Apollo having laid his harp upon a stone, it became so melodious by the touch of the instrument, that whenever it was struck with another stone, it emitted the musical notes of a harp.

In vain the crested morion veils his face,
 She thinks it adds a more peculiar grace :
 His ample shield, emboss'd with burnish'd gold,
 Still makes the bearer lovelier to behold :
 When the tough javelin, with a whirl, he sends,
 His strength and skill the sighing maid commends ;
 Or, when he strains to draw the circling bow,
 And his fine limbs a manly posture show,
 Compared with Phœbus,* he performs so well,
 Let her be judge, and Minos shall excel.

But when the helm put off, display'd to sight,
 And set his features in an open light ;
 When, vaulting to his seat, his steed he press'd,
 Caparison'd in gold, and richly dress'd,
 Himself in scarlet sumptuously array'd,
 New transports rise, and fire the frantic maid.
 "O happy spear," she cries, "that feels his touch ;
 Nay, e'en the reins he holds are bless'd too much."
 O! were it lawful, she could wing her way
 Through the stern hostile troops without dismay,
 Or throw her body to the distant ground,
 And in the Cretans' happy camp be found.
 Would Minos but desire it, she'd expose
 Her native country to her country's foes.
 Unbar the gates, the town with flames infest,
 Or any thing that Minos should request.

And as she sat, and pleased her longing sight,
 Viewing the king's pavilion, veil'd with white,
 "Should joy or grief," she said, "possess my breast,
 To see my country by a war oppress'd ?
 I'm in suspense! for, though 'tis grief to know
 I love a man that is declared my foe,
 Yet, in my own despite, I must approve
 That lucky war, which brought the man I love :
 Yet were I tender'd as a pledge of peace,
 The cruelties of war might quickly cease :
 O! with what joy I'd wear the chains he gave,
 A patient hostage, and a willing slave.
 O! had I wings, to glide along the air,
 To his dear tent I'd fly, and settle there ;

* "Compared with Phœbus," Phœbus, or Apollo, presided over archery,

There tell my quality, confess my flame,
And grant him any dowry that he'd name ;
All, all I'd give ; only my native land,
My dearest country, should excepted stand ;
For, perish love, and all expected joys,
Ere with so base a thought my soul complies.
Yet oft the vanquish'd some advantage find,
When conquer'd by a noble generous mind.
Brave Minos justly has the war begun,
Fired with resentment for his murder'd son :
The righteous gods a righteous cause regard,
And will with victory his arms reward :
We must be conquer'd ; and the captive's fate
Will surely seize us, though it seize us late.
Why then should love be idle, and neglect
What Mars,* by arms and perils, will effect ?
O prince ! I die, with anxious fear oppress'd,
Lest some rash hand should wound my hero's breast ;
For, if they saw, no barb'rous mind could dare
Against that noble form to raise a spear.

" But I'm resolved, and fixed in this decree,
My father's country shall my dowry be :
Thus I prevent the loss of life and blood,
And, in effect, the action must be good.
Vain resolution ! for at every gate
The trusty sentinels successive wait ;
The keys my father keeps ; ah ! there's my grief ;
'Tis he obstructs all hopes of my relief.
Gods ! that this hated life I'd never seen !
Or all my life without a father been !
But gods we all may be ; for those that dare
Are gods, and Fortune's chiefest favours share :
The ruling powers an idle prayer detest ;
The bold adventurer succeeds the best.
What other maid, inspired with such a flame,
But would take courage, and abandon shame :
But would, though ruin should ensue, remove
Whate'er opposed, and clear the way to love ?
This shall another's feeble passion dare,
While I sit tame, and languish in despair ?
No ; for though fire and sword before me lay,
Impatient love through both should force its way.

* Mars, the god of war.

Yet I have no such enemies to fear ;
 My sole obstruction is my father's hair ;
 His purple lock my sanguine hope destroys,
 And clouds the prospect of my rising joys."

While thus she spoke, amid the thick'ning air
 Night supervenes, the greatest nurse of care ;
 And as the goddess spreads her sable wings,
 The virgin's fears decay, and courage springs.
 The hour was come, when man's o'er laboured breast
 Surceased its care, by downy sleep possess'd :
 All things now hush'd, Scylla, with silent tread,
 Urged her approach to Nisus' royal bed ;
 There of the fatal lock (accursed theft !)
 She her unwitting father's head bereft.
 In safe possession of her impious prey,
 Out at a postern gate she takes her way.
 Embolden'd by the merit of the deed,
 She traverses the adverse camp with speed,
 Till Minos' tent she reach'd : the righteous king
 She thus bespoke, who shiver'd at the thing :
 " Behold the effect of love's resistless sway !
 I, Nisus' royal child, to thee betray
 My country and my gods. For this strange task,
 Minos, no other boon but thee, I ask.
 This purple lock, a pledge of love, receive ;
 No worthless present, since in it I give
 My father's head." Moved at a crime so new,
 And with abhorrence fill'd, back Minos drew,
 Nor touch'd the unhallow'd gift, but thus exclaim'd
 (With mien indignant, and with eyes inflamed)—
 " Perdition seize thee, thou, thy kind's disgrace !
 May thy devoted carcass find no place
 In earth, or air, or sea, by all outcast !
 Shall Minos, with so foul a monster, blast
 His Cretan world, where cradled Jove was nursed ?*
 Forbid it, heaven !—away, thou most accursed !"

And now Alcathoe,† its lord exchanged,
 Was under Minos' domination ranged.
 While the most equal king his care applies
 To curb the conquer'd, and new laws devise ;

* "Where cradled Jove was nursed." Jupiter, say the poets, passed his infancy on mount Ida, in the island of Crete.

† *Alcathoe*, a name applied to *Megara*.

The fleet, by his command, with hoisted sails,
 And ready oars, invites the murmuring gales.
 At length the Cretan hero anchor weigh'd,
 Repaying with neglect the abandon'd maid :
 Deaf to her cries, he furrows up the main ;
 In vain she prays, solicits him in vain.
 And now she furious grows, in wild despair
 She wrings her hands, and throws aloft her hair.
 " Where runn'st thou ? " thus she vents her deep distress,
 " Why shunn'st thou her that crown'd thee with success ?
 Her whose fond love to thee could sacrifice
 Her country and her parent ; sacred ties !
 Can nor my love, nor proffer'd presents, find
 A passage to thy heart, and make thee kind ?
 Can nothing move thy pity ? O ingrate !
 Canst thou behold my lost, forlorn estate,
 And not be soften'd ? Canst thou throw off one
 Who has no refuge left but thee alone ?
 Where shall I seek for comfort ? whither fly ?
 My native country does in ashes lie :
 Or were't not so, my treason bars me there,
 And bids me wander. Shall I next repair
 To a wrong'd father, by my guilt undone ?—
 Me all mankind deservedly will shun.
 I out of all the world myself have thrown,
 To purchase an access to Crete alone,
 Which, since refused, ungenerous man, give o'er
 To boast thy race ; Europa never bore
 A thing so savage : thee some tigress bred,
 On the bleak Syrt's* inhospitable bed,
 Or where Charybdis† pours its rapid tide
 Tempestuous. Thou art not to Jove allied.
 O, father Nisus, now my death behold :
 Exult, O city, by my baseness sold :
 Minos, obdurate, has avenged ye all ;
 But 'twas more just by those I wrong'd to fall :
 For why shouldst thou, who only didst subdue
 By my offending, my offence pursue ?
 What, what avail my plaints ? the whistling wind,
 Which bears him far away, leaves them behind,

* Syrtis, a gulf on the northern coast of Africa, considered very dangerous by mariners.

† Charybdis, a dangerous whirlpool on the coast of Sicily.

But ah ! time presses, and the labour'd oars
 To distance drive the fleet, and lose the lessening shores.
 Think not, ungrateful man, the liquid way
 And threat'ning billows shall enforce my stay :
 I'll follow thee in spite : my arms I'll throw
 Around thy oars, or grasp thy crooked prow,
 And drag through drenching seas." Her eager tongue
 Had hardly closed the speech, when forth she sprung,
 And proved the deep. Cupid, with added force,
 Recruits each nerve, and aids her watery course.
 Soon she the ship attains ; unwelcome guest !
 And as with close embrace its sides she press'd,
 A hawk from upper air came pouring down.
 ("Twas Nisus cleft the sky with wings new-grown.)
 At Scylla's head his horny bill he aims ;
 She, fearful of the blow, the ship disclaims,
 Quitting her held ; and yet she fell not far,
 But, wond'ring, finds herself sustain'd in air.
 Changed to a lark, she mottled pinions shook,
 And, from the stolen lock, the name of Ciris took.
 Now Minos, landed on the Cretan shore,
 Performs his vows to Jove's protecting power ;
 A hundred bullocks of the largest breed,
 With flowerets crown'd, before his altar bleed ;
 While trophies of the vanquish'd, brought from far,
 Adorn the palace with the spoils of war.

 THE LABYRINTH.

THE labyrinth was a building, whose numerous passages and intricate windings rendered an escape from it difficult, and almost impracticable. There were four, very famous among the ancients, one near the city of Crocodiles, or Arsinoë, in Egypt, another in Crete, a third at Lemnos, and a fourth in Italy. The labyrinth of Crete was built by Dædalus, an Athenian, and was the most celebrated of all in classical history, being the place of confinement of Dædalus himself, and the prison of the Minotaur. The labyrinth of Egypt, (in imitation of which that of Crete was built,) was the most ancient ; Herodotus, who saw it, declares that the beauty and art of the building were almost beyond belief. It was built by twelve kings of Egypt, and was intended for the

place of their burial, and to commemorate the events of their reign. It was divided into twelve halls according to some authors, into sixteen according to others, and some mention twenty-seven. They had each six doors opening to the north, and as many to the south, all surrounded by one wall. The edifice contained three thousand apartments, fifteen hundred in the upper part, and fifteen hundred below. The roofs and walls were incrustated with marble, and adorned with sculptured figures, and the halls were surrounded with stately and polished pillars of white marble.

Great Dædalus of Athens was the man
That made the draught, and form'd the wond'rous plan ;
Where rooms within themselves encircled lie,
With various windings, to deceive the eye.
As soft Mæander's* wanton current plays,
When through the Phrygian fields it loosely strays ;
Backward and forward rolls the dimpled tide,
Seeming at once two different ways to glide :
While circling streams their former banks survey,
And waters past succeeding waters see ;
Now floating to the sea with downward course,
Now pointing upward to its ancient source :
Such was the work, so intricate the place,
That scarce the workman all its turns could trace ;
And Dædalus was puzzled how to find
The secret ways of what himself design'd.
These private walls the Minotaur include,
Who twice was glutted with Athenian blood ;
But the third tribute more successful proved,—
Slew the foul monster, and the plague removed.
When Theseus, aided by the virgin's art,†
Had traced the guiding thread through every part,
He took the gentle maid that set him free,
And, bound for Dias,‡ cut the briny sea ;
There, quickly tir'd, ungrateful, and unkind,
Left his fair consort in the isle behind,

* Mæander, a river of Asia Minor, rising in Phrygia, remarkable for the winding nature of its course.

† "Aided by the virgin's art." Ariadne, the daughter of Minos, king of Crete, gave Theseus a clew of thread, by means of which he extricated himself from the labyrinth. See story of Theseus, page 146.

‡ Dias, a name given to the island of Naxos in the Ægean Sea.

Whom Bacchus sees and loves ; decrees the dame
 Shall shine for ever in the rolls of fame ;
 And bids her crown among the stars be placed,*
 With an eternal constellation graced.
 The golden circle mounts, and, as it flies,
 Its diamonds twinkle in the distant skies ;
 There, in their pristine form, the gemmy rays
 Between Alcides and the dragon† blaze.

Athens no more her doleful tribute sent,
 That hardship gallant Theseus did prevent ;
 Their temples hung with garlands, they adore
 Each friendly god, but most Minerva's power ;
 To her, to Jove, to all, their altars smoke,
 They each with victims and perfumes invoke.
 Now talking Fame, through every Grecian town,
 Had spread immortal Theseus' high renown.
 From him, the neighbouring nations, in distress,
 In suppliant terms implored a kind redress.

THE STORY OF DÆDALUS AND ICARUS.

DÆDALUS, an Athenian, was the most ingenious artist of his age. Having caused the death of his nephew, who promised to rival him in skill, he fled with his son Icarus to Crete, where he was kindly received by Minos, king of the island. Dædalus, in obedience to the commands of the monarch, constructed the celebrated labyrinth, in which he himself was afterwards imprisoned by order of the king, whom he had offended. He effected his escape by means of artificial wings, made of feathers and wax, which having adjusted to his own person, and also a pair to that of his son, they took their flight in the air. Icarus, soaring too high, the wax of his wings was dissolved by the heat of the sun, and he fell into that part of the ocean, named from him, the Icarian Sea. His father alighted safely at Cumæ, in

* "Her crown among the stars be placed." Venus presented Ariadne with a crown of seven stars, which was translated to the heavens, where it shines as a constellation, called Corona Borealis, or the Northern Crown.

† "Alcides and the dragon." Hercules, (or Alcides,) was after death placed among the constellations. The dragon is also a constellation.

Italy, where he built a temple which was dedicated to Apollo; he thence repaired to Sicily, and was kindly received by Cocalus, who reigned over part of the country.

In tedious exile now too long detain'd,
Dædalus languish'd for his native land;
The sea foreclosed his flight, yet thus he said:
"Though earth and water in subjection laid
O cruel Minos, thy dominion be,
We'll go through air; for sure the air is free."
Then to new arts his cunning thought applies,
And to improve the work of nature tries.
A row of quills in gradual order placed,
Rise by degrees in length from first to last;
As on a cliff the ascending thicket grows,
Or different reeds the rural pipe compose.
Along the middle runs a twine of flax,
The bottom stems are join'd by pliant wax:
Thus, well compact, a hollow bending brings
The fine composure into real wings.

His boy, young Icarus, that near him stood,
Unthinking of his fate, with smiles pursued
The floating feathers, which the moving air
Bore loosely from the ground, and wafted here and there:
Or with the wax impertinently play'd,
And, with his childish tricks, the great design delay'd.

The final master-stroke at last imposed,
And now, the neat machine completely closed;
Fitting his pinions on, a flight he tries,
And hung, self-balanced, in the beaten skies.
Then thus instructs his child: "My boy, take care
To wing your course along the middle air:
If low, the surges wet your flagging plumes;
If high, the sun the melting wax consumes.
Steer between both; nor to the northern skies,
Nor south Orion,* turn your giddy eyes,
But follow me: let me before you lay
Rules for the flight, and mark the pathless way."
Then, teaching, with a fond concern, his son,
He took the untried wings and fix'd them on;

* Orion, a southern constellation.

But fix'd with trembling hands ; and, as he speaks,
The tears roll gently down his aged cheeks :
Then kissed, and in his arms embraced him fast,
But knew not this embrace must be the last ;
And, mounting upward, as he wings his flight,
Back on his charge he turns his aching sight ;
As parent birds, when first their callow care
Leave the high nest to tempt the liquid air :
Then cheers him on, and oft, with fatal art,
Reminds the stripling to perform his part.

These, as the angler at the silent brook,
Or mountain shepherd leaning on his crook,
Or gaping ploughman, from the vale descries,
They stare and view them with religious eyes,
And straight conclude them gods ; since none but they
Through their own azure skies could find a way.
Now Delos,* Paros,† on the left are seen,
And Samos,‡ favour'd by Jove's haughty queen ;
Upon the right, the isle Lebythnos named,
And fair Calymne,§ for its honey famed.
When now the boy, whose childish thoughts aspire
To loftier aims, and make him ramble higher,
Grown wild and wanton, more imbolden'd, flies
Far from his guide, and soars among the skies.
The softening wax, that felt a nearer sun,
Dissolved apace, and soon began to run ;
The youth in vain his melting pinions shakes,
His feathers gone, no longer air he takes ;
O ! father, father ! as he strove to cry,
Down to the sea he tumbled from on high,
And found his fate ; yet still subsists by fame
Among those waters that retain his name.||
His scatter'd plumage danced upon the wave,**
And sorrowing mermaids deck'd his watery grave ;
O'er his pale corse their pearly sea-flowers shed,
And strew'd with crimson moss his marble bed ;

* Delos, † Paros, islands in the *Ægean Sea*.

‡ Samos, an island of the *Ægean Sea*, where Juno was born, and worshipped with great solemnity.

§ Calymne, an island of the *Ægean Sea*, celebrated for its honey.

|| "The waters that retain his name." The sea of Icaria. The body of Icarus was washed on the island of Icaria.

** "His scatter'd plumage," &c. The six following lines, are taken from Darwin's *Botanic Garden*.

Struck in their coral towers the pausing bell,
And wide in ocean toll'd his echoing knell.

The father, now no more a father, cries :
" Ho, Icarus ! where are you ? " as he flies ;
" Where shall I seek my boy ? " he cries again,
And saw his feathers scatter'd on the main.
Then cursed his art ; and funeral rites conferr'd,
Naming the country from the youth interr'd.
To the Cumæan* coast at length he came,
And, there alighting, built a costly frame
Inscribed to Phœbus, there he hung on high
The steerage of his wings, that cut the sky :
Then, o'er the lofty gate, his art emboss'd
Androgeus† death, and (off'rings to his ghost,)
Seven youths from Athens yearly sent, to meet
The fate appointed by revengeful Crete.
And next to these the dreadful urn was placed,
In which the destined names by lot were cast :
The mournful parents stand around in tears :
And rising Crete against their shore appears.
Not far from thence he grav'd the wondrous maze ;
A thousand doors, a thousand winding ways ;
Here dwells the monster hid from human view,
Not to be found but by the faithful clew ;
Till the kind artist, moved with pious grief,
Lent to the loving maid this last relief ;
And all those erring paths described so well,
That Theseus conquer'd, and the monster fell.
Here hapless Icarus had found his part,
Had not the father's grief restrain'd his art ;
He twice essay'd to cast his son in gold ;
Twice from his hands he dropp'd the forming mould.
And now from Cumæ's shore Dædalus flies,
And to Sicilia's plains at length arrives ;
Where Cocalus, the king, that gave him aid,
Was, for his kindness, with esteem repaid.

* "To the Cumæan coast." The twenty four following lines, are taken from the Sixth book of Virgil's *Æneid*. Cumæ, was a city of Italy.

† Androgeus' death. Androgeus was the son of Minos, and it was in consequence of his murder by the Athenians, that the tribute of the youths and maidens was required, in order to appease his ghost.

THE STORY OF ANTS CHANGED TO MEN.

ÆACUS, the son of Jupiter and **Ægina**, was king of **CEnopia**, (an island in the **Ægean Sea**,) the name of which he changed to **Ægina**, in honour of his mother. A pestilence having destroyed all his subjects, he entreated Jupiter to re-people his kingdom, and according to his request, all the ants which were in an old oak were changed to men, and called by **Æacus**, **Myrmidons**, from a Greek word signifying *an ant*. He was a man of such integrity, that the ancients constituted him one of the judges of the infernal regions, with **Minos** and **Rhadamanthus**.

THE STORY OF ANTS CHANGED TO MEN, RELATED BY **ÆACUS**.

A DREADFUL plague,* from angry Juno came,
To scourge the land that bore her rival's name ;†
Before her fatal anger was reveal'd,
And teeming malice lay as yet conceal'd,
All remedies we try, all med'cines use,
Which nature could supply, or art produce ;
The unconquer'd foe derides the vain design,
And art and nature soil'd, declare the cause divine.
" At first we only felt the oppressive weight
Of gloomy clouds, then teeming with our fate,
And lab'ring to discharge inactive heat :
But ere four moons alternate changes knew,
With deadly blasts the fatal south wind blew,
Infected all the air, and poison'd as it flew.
Our fountains too a dire infection yield,
For crowds of vipers creep along the field,
And, with polluted gore, and baneful steams,
Taint all the lakes, and venom all the streams.

* The plague which ravaged Athens, about 430 B. C., and to which the illustrious **Pericles** fell a victim, is described by **Thucydides** as attended with the same symptoms in every respect, as the pestilence here mentioned.

† " Her rival's name." **Ægina** was carried away by Jupiter under the form of an eagle to the island of **CEnopia**, to which she gave her own name. Some say that Jupiter appeared to **Ægina** in the form of a lambent flame.

"The young disease with milder force began,
 And raged on birds and beasts, excusing man.
 The lab'ring oxen fall before the plough;
 The unhappy ploughmen stare, and wonder how:
 The tabid sheep, with sickly bleatings, pines
 Its wool decreasing as its strength declines;
 The warlike steed, by inward foes compell'd,
 Neglects his honours, and deserts the field,
 Unnerved and languid, seeks a base retreat,
 And at the manger groans, but wish'd a nobler fate:
 The stags forget their speed, the boars their rage,
 Nor can the bears the stronger herds engage;
 A general faintness does invade them all,
 And in the woods and fields promiscuously they fall.
 The air receives the stench, and, strange to say,
 The rav'nous birds and beasts avoid the prey;
 The offensive bodies rot upon the ground,
 And spread the dire contagion all around.

"But now the plague, grown to a larger size,
 Riots on man, and scorns a meaner prize.
 Intestine heats begin the civil war,
 And flushings first the latent flame declare,
 And breath inspired, which seem'd like fiery air.
 Their black dry tongues are swell'd, and scarce can move,
 And short thick sighs from panting lungs are drove;
 They gape for air, with flattering hopes to abate
 Their raging flames, but that augments their heat.
 No bed, no covering, can the wretches bear,
 But on the ground, exposed to open air,
 They lie, and hope to find a pleasing coolness there.
 The suffering earth, with that oppression curs'd,
 Returns the heat which they imparted first.

"In vain physicians would bestow their aid,
 Vain all their art, and useless all their trade;
 And they, even they, who fleeting life recall,
 Feel the same powers, and undistinguish'd fall.
 If any proves so daring to attend
 His sick companion, or his darling friend,
 The officious wretch sucks in contagious breath,
 And with his friend does sympathize in death.

"And now the care and hopes of life are pass'd,
 They please their fancies, and indulge their taste:
 At brooks and streams, regardless of their shame,
 Each sex, promiscuous, strives to quench their flame;

Nor do they strive in vain to quench it there,
For thirst and life at once extinguish'd are ;
Thus in the brooks the dying bodies sink,
But heedless still the rash survivors drink.

" So much uneasy down the wretches hate,
They fly their beds, to struggle with their fate ;
But if decaying strength forbids to rise,
The victim crawls and rolls, till on the ground he lies :
Each shuns his bed as each would shun his tomb,
And thinks the infection only lodged at home.

" Here one, with fainting steps, does slowly creep
O'er heaps of dead, and straight augments the heap :
Another, while his strength and tongue prevail'd,
Bewails his friend, and falls himself, bewail'd :
This, with imploring looks, surveys the skies,
The last dear office of his closing eyes,
But finds the heavens implacable, and dies.

" What now, ah, what ! employ'd my troubled mind,
But only hopes my subjects' fate to find ?
What place soe'er my weeping eyes survey,
There in lamented heaps the vulgar lay ;
As acorns scatter when the winds prevail,
Or mellow fruit from shaken branches fall.

" That splendid dome, which rears its front so high,
Is sacred to the monarch of the sky :
How many there, with unregarded tears,
And fruitless vows, sent up successful prayers !
There fathers for expiring sons implored,
And there the wife bewail'd her gasping lord :
With pious offerings they appease the skies,
But they, ere yet the atoning vapours rise,
Before the altars fall, themselves a sacrifice ;
They fall while yet their hands the gums contain,
The gums surviving, but their offerers slain.

" The destined ox, with holy garlands crown'd,
Prevents the blow, and feels an unexpected wound.
When I myself invoked the powers divine,
To drive the fatal pest from me and mine :
When now the priest with hands uplifted stood,
Prepared to strike, and shed the sacred blood,
The gods themselves the mortal stroke bestow,
The victim falls, but they impart the blow ;

Scarce was the knife with the pale purple stain'd,*
And no presages could be then obtain'd,
From putrid entrails, where the infection reign'd.†

"Death stalk'd around with such resistless sway,
The temples of the gods his force obey,
And suppliants feel his stroke while yet they pray.
'Go now,' said he 'your deities implore
For fruitless aid, for I defy their power ;'
Then, with a cursed, malicious joy survey'd
The very altars, stain'd with trophies of the dead.

"The rest grown mad, and frantic with despair,
Urge their own fate, and so prevent their fear.
Strange madness that, when death pursued so fast,
To anticipate the blow with impious haste.

"No decent honours to their urns are paid,
Nor could the graves receive the numerous dead ;
For, or they lay unburied on the ground,
Or, unadorn'd, a needy funeral found :
All reverence past, the fainting wretches fight
For funeral piles which were another's right.
Unmourn'd they fall, for who survived to mourn ?
And sires and mothers unlamented burn ;
Parents and sons sustain an equal fate,
And wandering ghosts their kindred shadows meet :
The dead a larger space of ground require,
Nor are the trees sufficient for the fire.

"Despairing under grief's oppressive weight,
And sunk by these tempestuous blasts of fate,
'O Jove,' said I, 'if common fame says true,
If e'er Ægina was beloved by you ;
O father, if you do not yet disclaim
Paternal care, nor yet disown the name,
Grant my petitions, and with speed restore
My subjects numerous as they were before,
Or make me partner of the fate they bore !'
I spoke, and glorious lightning shone around,
And rattling thunder gave a prosperous sound ;‡

* "Scarce was the knife with purple stain'd." If the animal sacrificed did not bleed freely, it was considered an unlucky omen.

† "From putrid entrails where the infection reign'd." It was necessary that the victim offered should be perfectly sound.

‡ "And rattling thunder gave a prosperous sound." Thunder or lightning, if appearing on the right hand, was considered by the Greeks a good omen ; if on the left, unlucky.

'So let it be, and may these omens prove
A pledge,' said I, 'of your returning love.'

"By chance a reverend oak was near the place,
Sacred to Jove, and of Dodona's race,*

Where frugal ants laid up their winter meat,
Whose little bodies bear a mighty weight :
We saw them march along, and hide their store,
And much admired their number and their power ;
Admired at first, but after envied more.

Full of amazement, thus to Jove I pray'd :

'O grant, since thus my subjects are decay'd,
As many subjects to supply the dead.'

I pray'd, and strange convulsions moved the oak,
Which murmur'd, though by ambient winds unshook :
My trembling hands, and stiff erected hair,
Express'd all tokens of uncommon fear ;
Yet both the earth and sacred oak I kiss'd,
And scarce could hope, yet still I hoped the best ;
For wretches, whatsoe'er the Fates divine,
Expound all omens to their own design.

"But now 'twas night, when e'en distraction wears
A pleasing look, and dreams beguile our cares :
Lo ! the same oak appears before my eyes,
Nor alter'd in its shape nor former size ;
As many ants the numerous branches bear,
The same their labour and their frugal care ;
The branches too a like commotion found,
And shook the industrious creatures on the ground,
Who by degrees (what's scarce to be believed)
A nobler form and larger bulk received,
And on the earth walk'd an unusual pace,
With manly strides and an erected face :
Their numerous legs and former colour lost,
The insects could a human figure boast.

"I wake, and, waking, find my cares again,
And to the unperforming gods complain,
And call their promise and pretences vain.
Yet in my court I heard the murmur of the
Of strangers, and a mix'd, uncommon noise :

* "Dodona's race." At Dodona, in Epirus, there was an Oracle sacred to Jupiter. The priestess declared the will of the gods, and predicted future events, by observing attentively the murmur of the sacred Oaks ; or by listening to the voice of a fleeting spring.

But I suspected all was still a dream,
Till Telamon to my apartment came,
Opening the door with an impetuous haste,—
'O come,' said he, 'and see your faith and hopes surpass'd.'
I follow, and, confused with wonder, view
Those shapes which my presaging slumbers drew :
I saw, and own'd, and call'd them subjects ; they
Confess'd my power, submissive to my sway.
To Jove, restorer of my race decay'd,
My vows were first with due oblations paid ;
I then divide, with an impartial hand,
My empty city, and my ruin'd land,
To give the newborn youth an equal share,
And call them Myrmidons, from what they were.
Though changed their persons, yet they still retain
The thrift of ants, though now transform'd to men ;
A frugal people, and inured to sweat,
Lab'ring to gain, and keeping what they get."

THE STORY OF CEPHALUS AND PROCRIS.

CEPHALUS, a beautiful youth, was beloved by Aurora who carried him with her to heaven ; but he, passionately attached to a young and lovely wife, regarded the goddess with indifference and contempt, and expressed his extreme impatience to return to his beloved Procris. Aurora at length allowed him to depart, but prevailed upon him to assume the garb of a merchant, and in that disguise to visit his bride, and ascertain the strength of her constancy and affection. Cephalus, in pursuance of this plan, repaired to his house, where he found his wife lamenting his absence, and refusing all consolation :—but, on discovering the supposed stranger to be her husband, indignant at his jealous suspicions, she fled from him, and was admitted by Diana as one of her attendants. The goddess presented Procris with a dog that was always sure of his prey, and with an arrow which never missed its aim, and which always returned to the hand of its owner. Procris being at length reconciled to her husband, gave him the presents which she had received. Cephalus was extremely fond of hunting, and used to spend part of every day in that

amusement, and when fatigued, he usually laid himself down in some shady spot, calling for Aura, or the refreshing breeze. This ambiguous word was mistaken for the name of a nymph, by some person who mentioned it to Procris; she determined to watch and discover her rival; and accordingly repaired to the woods, where she concealed herself. Cephalus, as usual, calling upon Aura, she lifted up her head to obtain a view of the supposed nymph, but the rustling noise which she made among the leaves, inducing Cephalus to imagine that some game was at hand, he threw his fatal dart, which pierced Procris to the heart. She expired in the arms of her husband, to whom she confessed her suspicions, and acknowledged that she had fallen a victim to her groundless jealousy.

THE STORY OF CEPHALUS AND PROCRIS.

Phocus, observing Cephalus to hold
 A dart of unknown wood, but tipp'd with gold,—
 "None better loves," said he, "the huntsman's sport,
 Or does more often to the woods resort,
 Yet I that javelin's stem with wonder view,
 Too brown for box, too smooth a grain for yew;
 I cannot guess the tree; but never art
 Did forin, or eyes behold, so fair a dart!"
 Cephalus interrupts him:—" 'Twould produce
 Still greater wonder, if you knew its use:
 It never fails to strike the game, and then
 Comes bloody back into your hand again."
 Then Phocus each particular desires,
 And the author of the wondrous gift inquires;
 To which the owner thus, with weeping eyes,
 And sorrow for his wife's sad fate, replies:
 "This weapon here, O prince! can you believe
 This dart the cause for which so much I grieve,
 And shall continue to grieve on, till Fate
 Afford such wretched life no longer date.
 Would I this fatal gift had ne'er enjoy'd;
 This fatal gift my tender wife destroy'd;

Procris her name, allied in charms and blood
 To fair Orythia,* courted by a god.
 Her father seal'd my hopes with rites divine,
 But firmer love before had made her mine.
 Men call'd me bless'd, and bless'd I was indeed.
 The second month our nuptials did succeed,
 When (as upon Hymettus† dewy head,
 For mountain stage, my net betimes I spread)
 Aurora‡ spied, and carried me away,—
 With rev'rence to the goddess, I must say,
 Against my will, for Procris had my heart,
 Nor would her image from my thoughts depart.
 At last, in rage, she cried, 'ungrateful boy,
 Go to your Procris, take your fatal joy :'
 And so dismiss'd me ; musing, as I went,
 What those expressions of the goddess meant,
 A thousand jealous fears possess me now,
 Lest Procris had forgot her nuptial vow.
 I had been absent long ; the goddess too
 Taught me how far a woman could be true.
 Aurora's treatment much suspicion bred ;
 Besides, who truly love, e'en shadows dread.
 I straight impatient for the trial grew.
 What courtship back'd with richest gifts could do.
 Aurora's envy aided my design,
 And lent me features far unlike to mine.
 In this disguise to my own house I came,
 But all was right, no conscious sign of blame.
 With thousand arts I scarce admittance found,
 And then beheld her weeping on the ground
 For her lost husband : hardly I retain'd
 My purpose, scarce the wish'd embrace refrain'd.
 Her constant answer, when my suit I press'd,
 'Forbear, my lord's dear image guards this breast ;
 Where'er he is, whatever cause detains,
 Whoe'er has his, my heart unmoved remains.'
 What greater proofs of truth than these could be ?
 Yet I persist, and urge my destiny.

* Orythia, the daughter of Erectheus, king of Athens, was beloved by Boreas, the god of the north wind.

† Hymettus, a mountain of Attica, in Greece, celebrated for its bees.

‡ Aurora, the goddess of the morning ; see note, Aurora, page 34.

At length she found, when my own form return'd,
 Her jealous lover there, whose loss she mourn'd.
 Enraged with my suspicion, swift as wind,
 She fled at once from me and all mankind ;
 And so became, her purpose to retain,
 A nymph, and huntress in Diana's* train.
 Forsaken thus, I found my love increase,
 I own'd my folly, and I sued for peace :
 It was a fault, but not of guilt, to move
 Such punishment,—a fault of too much love.
 Thus I retriev'd her——
 And with herself she kindly did confer
 What gifts the goddess had bestow'd on her :
 The fleetest greyhound, with this lovely dart,—
 And I of both have wonders to impart.
 Near Thebes a savage beast, of race unknown,
 Laid waste the field, and bore the vineyards down :
 The swains fled from him ; and, with one consent,
 Our Grecian youth to chase the monster went.
 More swift than lightning he the toils surpass'd,
 And in his course, spears, men, and trees, o'ercast.
 We slipp'd our dogs, and last my Lelaps too,
 When none of all the mortal race would do :
 He long before was struggling from my hands,
 And, ere we could unloose him, broke his bands :
 That minute where he was we could not find,
 And only saw the dust he left behind.
 I climb'd a neighbouring hill to view the chase,
 While in the plain they held an equal race :
 The savage now seems caught, and now, by force,
 To quit himself, nor holds the same straight course,
 But, running counter, from the foe withdraws,
 And with short turning cheats his gaping jaws,
 Which he retrieves, and still so closely press'd,
 You'd fear at every stretch he were possess'd,
 Yet for the gripe his fangs in vain prepare,—
 The game shoots from him, and he chops the air.
 To cast my javelin then I took my stand,
 But as the thongs were fitting to my hand,
 While to the valley I o'erlook'd the wood,
 Before my eyes two marble statues stood ;

* Diana, the goddess of hunting.

That, as pursued appearing at full stretch,
 This, barking after, and at point to catch :
 Some god their course did with this wonder grace,
 That neither might be conquer'd in the chase."

"And now," said he, "past joys let me relate,
 For bliss was the foundation of my fate :
 No language can those happy hours express,
 Did from our nuptials me and Procris bless :
 The kindest pair! what more could Heaven confer?
 For she was all to me, and I to her.
 Had Jove made love, great Jove had been despised;
 And I my Procris more than Venus prized.
 Thus while no other joy we did aspire,
 We grew at last one soul and one desire.
 Forth to the woods I went at break of day,
 (The constant practice of my youth,) for prey;
 Nor yet for servant, horse, or dog, did call,—
 I found this single dart to serve for all.
 With slaughter tired, I sought the cooler shade,
 And winds that from the mountains pierced the glade.
 'Come, gentle air,' so was I wont to say,
 'Come, gentle air,—sweet Aura come away.'
 This always was the burden of my song,—
 'Come 'suage my flames—sweet Aura, come along :
 Thou always art most welcome to my breast;
 I faint; approach, thou dearest, kindest guest ;'
 These blandishments, and more than these, I said,
 (By Fate to unsuspected ruin led,)
 'Thou art my joy; for thy dear sake I love
 Each desert hill and solitary grove;
 When (faint with labour) I refreshment need,
 For cordials on thy fragrant breath I feed.'
 At last a wandering swain in hearing came,
 And, cheated with the sound of Aura's name,
 He thought I had some assignation made,
 And to my Procris' ear the news convey'd.
 Great love is soonest with suspicion fired :
 She swoon'd, and with the tale almost expired.
 'Ah, wretched heart!' she cried, 'ah, faithless man !'
 And then to curse the imagined nymph began :
 Yet oft she doubts, oft hopes she is deceived,
 And chides herself, that ever she believed
 Her lord to such injustice could proceed,
 Till she herself were witness of the deed.

Next morn I to the woods again repair,
 And, weary with the chase, invoke the air :
 'Approach, dear Aura, and my bosom cheer :'
 At which a mournful sound did strike my ear :
 Yet I proceeded, till the thicket by,
 With rustling noise and motion, drew my eye.
 I thought some beast of prey was shelter'd there,
 And to the covert threw my certain spear ;
 From whence a tender sigh my soul did wound :
 'Ah me !' it cried, and did like Procris sound.
 Procris was there, too well the voice I knew,
 And to the place with headlong horror flew ;
 Where I beheld her gasping on the ground,
 In vain attempting from the deadly wound
 To draw the dart, her love's dear fatal gift !
 My guilty arms had scarce the strength to lift
 The beauteous load : my silks and hair I tore
 (If possible,) to stanch the pressing gore ;
 For pity begg'd her keep her fitting breath,
 And not to leave me guilty of her death.
 While I entreat she fainted fast away,
 And these few words had only strength to say :
 'By all the sacred bonds of plighted love,
 By all your reverence to the powers above,
 By all that made me charming once appear,
 By all the truth for which you held me dear,
 And last, by love, the cause through which I bleed,
 Let Aura never to my place succeed.'
 I then perceived the error of our fate,
 And told it her, but found and told too late !
 I felt her lower to my bosom fall ;
 And while her eyes had any sight at all,
 On mine she fix'd them ; in her pangs still press'd
 My hand, and sigh'd her soul into my breast ;
 Yet, being undeceived, resign'd her breath
 Methought more cheerfully, and smiled in death."

 THE STORY OF BAUCIS AND PHILEMON.

BAUCIS and Philemon were an aged and indigent couple,
 who resided in a small cottage in Phrygia. Jupiter and
 Mercury, when travelling through Asia in disguise, were
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every where repulsed with rudeness and inhospitality, until they reached the habitation of this humble pair. By them they were received and entertained in the kindest and best manner their means allowed; and Jupiter, to reward their hospitality, metamorphosed their dwelling into a magnificent temple, of which he instituted Philemon the priest, and Baucis the priestess. After living happily to an extreme old age, they were both, at the same moment, changed to trees before the door of their temple; in answer to a prayer preferred by them to Jupiter, that they might die together, that neither might have the sorrow of following the other to the grave.

In Phrygian* ground
Two neighbouring trees, with walls encompass'd round,
Stand on a moderate rise, with wonder shown;
One a hard oak, a softer linden one:
Not far from thence is seen a lake, the haunt
Of coots, and of the fishing cormorant:
Here Jove with Hermes† came; but in disguise
Of mortal men conceal'd their deities;
One laid aside his thunder, one his rod,
And many toilsome steps together trod:
For harbour at a thousand doors they knock'd;
Not one of all the thousand but was lock'd.
At last a hospitable house they found,
A homely shed; the roof, not far from ground,
Was thatch'd, with reeds and straw together bound.
There Baucis and Philemon lived, and there
Had lived long married, and a happy pair:
Now old in love, though little was their store,
Inured to want, their poverty they bore,
Nor aim'd at wealth, professing to be poor.
For master or for servant here to call
Were all alike, where only two were all.
Command was none, where equal love was paid,
Or rather both commanded, both obey'd.

From lofty roofs the gods repulsed before,
Now stooping, enter'd through the little door:
The man (their hearty welcome first express'd)
A common settle drew for either guest,

* Phrygia, a country of Asia Minor.

† Hermes, a name given to Mercury.

Inviting each his weary limbs to rest.
 But ere they sat, officious Baucis lays
 Two cushions stuff'd with straw, the seat to raise ;
 Coarse, but the best she had ; then rakes the load
 Of ashes from the hearth, and spreads abroad
 The living coals ; and, lest they should expire,
 With leaves and bark she feeds her infant fire :
 It smokes ; and then with trembling breath she blows,
 Till in a cheerful blaze the flames arose.
 With brushwood and with chips she strengthens these,
 And adds at last the boughs of rotten trees.
 The fire thus form'd, she sets the kettle on
 Like burnish'd gold the little seether shone ;)
 Next took the coleworts which her husband got
 From his own ground (a small well water'd spot ;)
 She stripp'd the stalks of all their leaves ; the best
 She cull'd, and them with handy care she dress'd.
 High o'er the hearth a chine of bacon hung ;
 Good old Philemon seized it with a prong,
 And from the sooty rafter drew it down,
 Then cut a slice, but scarce enough for one ;
 Yet a large portion of a little store,
 Which for their sakes alone he wish'd were more.
 This in the pot he plunged without delay,
 To tame the flesh, and drain the salt away.
 The time between, before the fire they sat,
 And shorten'd the delay by pleasing chat.
 A beam there was, on which a beechen pail
 Hung by the handle, on a driven nail ;
 This fill'd with water, gently warm'd, they set
 Before their guests, and in it bathed their feet.
 This done, the host produced their only bed,
 Sallow the feet, the borders, and the stead,
 Which with no costly coverlet they spread,
 But coarse old garments ; yet such robes as these
 They laid alone at feasts on holydays.
 The good old housewife, tucking up her gown
 The table sets ; the invited gods lie down.
 The trivet-table of a foot was lame,
 A blot which prudent Baucis overcame,
 Who thrust beneath the limping leg a sherd ;
 So was the mended board exactly rear'd :
 Then rubb'd it o'er with newly-gather'd mint,
 A wholesome herb, that breathed a grateful scent.

Pallas* began the feast, where first was seen
The parti-colour'd olive, black and green :
Autumnal cornels next in order serv'd,
In lees of wine well pickled and preserved.
A garden salad was the third supply,
Of endive, radishes, and succory :
Then curds and cream, the flower of country fare,
And new-laid eggs, which Baucis' busy care
Turned by a gentle fire, and roasted rare.
All these in earthenware were served to board ;
And, next in place, an earthen pitcher stored
With liquor of the best the cottage could afford.
This was the table's ornament and pride,
With figures wrought : like pages at his side
Stood beechen bowls ; and these were shining clean,
Varnish'd with wax without, and lined within.
By this the boiling kettle had prepared,
And to the table sent the smoking lard ;
On which with eager appetite they dine,
A sav'ry bit, that served to relish wine ;
The wine itself was suiting to the rest,
Still working in the must, and lately press'd.
The second course succeeds like that before,
Plums, apples, nuts ; and of their wintry store
Dry figs, and grapes, and wrinkled dates were set
In canisters, to enlarge the little treat ;
All these a milk-white honeycomb surround,
Which in the midst the country banquet crown'd :
But the kind hosts their entertainment grace
With hearty welcome, and an open face :
In all they did, you might discern with ease
A willing mind, and a desire to please.
Meantime the beechen bowls went round, and still,
Though often emptied, were observed to fill :
Fill'd without hands, and of their own accord
Ran without feet, and danced about the board.
Devotion seized the pair, to see the feast
With wine, and of no common grape, increas'd ;
And up they held their hands, and fell to pray'r,
Excusing, as they could, their country fare.

* "Pallas began the feast;" alluding to Minerva's, (or Pallas,) producing the olive tree.

One goose they had ('twas all they could allow,)
 A wakeful sentry, and on duty now,
 Whom to the gods for sacrifice they vow :
 Her with malicious zeal the couple view'd ;
 She ran for life, and limping they pursued :
 Full well the fowl perceived their bad intent,
 And would not make her master's compliment ;
 But persecuted, to the powers she flies,
 And close between the legs of Jove she lies :
 He with a gracious ear the suppliant heard,
 And saved her life ; then what he was declared,
 And own'd the god. " The neighbourhood," said he,
 " Shall justly perish for impiety :
 You stand alone exempted ; but obey
 With speed, and follow where we lead the way :
 Leave these accursed, and to the mountain's height
 Ascend, nor once look backward in your flight."
 They haste, and what their tardy feet denied,
 The trusty staff (their better leg) supplied.
 An arrow's flight they wanted to the top,
 And there secure, but spent with travel, stop ;
 Then turn their now no more forbidden eyes ;
 Lost in a lake the floated level lies ;
 A watery desert covers all the plains,
 Their cot alone, as in an isle, remains.
 Wondering, with weeping eyes, while they deplore
 Their neighbours' fate, and country now no more ;
 Their little shed, scarce large enough for two,
 Seems, from the ground increased, in height and bulk to grow.
 A stately temple shoots within the skies,
 The crotchets of their cot in columns rise ;
 The pavement polish'd marble they behold,
 The gates with sculpture graced, the spires and tiles of gold.
 Then thus the sire of gods, with looks serene :
 " Speak thy desire, thou only just of men ;
 And thou, O woman, only worthy found
 To be with such a man in marriage bound."
 Awhile they whisper ; then to Jove address'd,
 Philemon thus prefers their joint request :
 " We crave to serve before your sacred shrine,
 And offer at your altar rites divine :
 And since not any action of our life
 Has been polluted with domestic strife,

We beg one hour of death, that neither she
 With widow's tears may live to bury me,
 Nor weeping I, with wither'd arms, may bear
 My breathless Baucis to the sepulchre."
 The godheads sign their suit. They run the race
 In the same tenour all the appointed space :
 Then, when their hour was come, while they relate
 These past adventures at the temple gate,
 Old Baucis is by old Philemon seen
 Sprouting with sudden leaves of sprightly green :
 Old Baucis look'd where old Philemon stood,
 And saw his lengthen'd arms a sprouting wood :
 New roots their fasten'd feet begin to bind,
 Their bodies stiffen in a rising rind :
 Then, ere the bark above their shoulders grew,
 They give and take at once their last adieu.
 "At once farewell, O faithful spouse," they said ;
 At once the encroaching rinds their closing lips invade.
 E'en yet, an ancient Tyanæan shows
 A spreading oak, that near a linden grows.

THE FABLE OF DRYOPE, RELATED BY IOLE.

DRYOPE, a nymph of Æchalia, incautiously plucked a
 branch of the lotos-tree, for the amusement of her infant
 son, and was herself transformed by the incensed sylvan
 deities, into a tree of the same species.

"No nymph of all Æchalia* could compare,
 For beauteous form, with Dryope the fair ;
 Her tender mother's only hope and pride
 (Myself the offspring of a second bride,)

This nymph, belov'd by him who rules the day,†
 Whom Delphi and the Delian isle obey,
 Andræmon won—

"A lake there was, with shelving banks around,
 Whose verdant summit fragrant myrtles crown'd.

* Æchalia, a city of Thessaly.

† "Belov'd by him who rules the day." Apollo, (or Phoebus.)

Those shades, unknowing of the Fates, she sought,
 And to the Naiads* flowery garlands brought ;
 Her smiling babe (a pleasing charge) she press'd
 Between her arms, and nourish'd at her breast.
 Not distant far a watery lotos grows ;
 The spring was new, and all the verdant boughs,
 Adorn'd with blossoms, promised fruits that vie
 In glowing colours with the Tyrian die.
 Of these she cropp'd, to please her infant son,
 And I myself the same rash act had done,
 But, lo ! I saw (as near her side I stood)
 The violated blossoms drop with blood ;
 Upon the tree I cast a frightened look,
 The trembling tree with sudden horror shook :
 Lotos the nymph (if rural tales be true)
 As from enamour'd Priapus† she flew,
 Forsook her form ; and fixing here, became
 A flowery plant, which still preserves her name.
 " This change unknown, astonish'd at the sight,
 My trembling sister strove to urge her flight ;
 Yet first the pardon of the nymphs implored,
 And those offended sylvan powers adored :
 But when she backward would have fled, she found
 Her stiff'ning feet were rooted to the ground :
 In vain to free her fasten'd feet she strove,
 And as she struggles only moves above ;
 She feels the encroaching bark around her grow
 By slow degrees, and cover all below.
 Surprised at this, her trembling hand she heaves
 To rend her hair ; her hand is fill'd with leaves ;
 Where late was hair, the shooting leaves are seen
 To rise, and shade her with a sudden green.
 The child Amphisus, to her bosom press'd,
 Perceived a colder and a harder breast,
 And found the springs, that ne'er till then denied
 Their milky moisture, on a sudden dried.
 I saw, unhappy, what I now relate,
 And stood the helpless witness of thy fate :

* Naiads, or Naiades ; inferior deities who presided over springs,
 wells, and fountains ; they generally inhabited the country, and re-
 sorted to the woods and meadows, near the streams over which they
 presided.

† Priapus ; the god of gardens.

Embraced thy boughs, the rising bark delay'd,
There wish'd to grow, and mingle shade with shade.

“ Behold Andræmon and the unhappy sire
Appear, and for their Dryope inquire ;
A springing tree for Dryope they find,
And print warm kisses on the panting rind ;
Prostrate, with tears their kindred plant bedew,
And close embraced, as to the root they grew ;
The face was all that now remain'd of thee ;
No more a woman, nor yet quite a tree :
Thy branches hung with humid pearls appear,
From every leaf distils a trickling tear ;
And straight a voice, while yet a voice remains,
Thus through the trembling boughs in sighs complains :

“ ‘ If to the wretched any faith be given,
I swear by all the unpitying powers of heaven,
No wilful crime this heavy vengeance bred,
In mutual innocence our lives we led.
If this be false, let these new greens decay,
Let sounding axes lop my limbs away,
And crackling flames on all my honours prey.
Now from my branching arms this infant bear,
Let some kind nurse supply a mother's care ;
Let to his mother let him oft be led,
Sport in her shades, and in her shades be fed ;
Teach him, when first his infant voice shall frame
Imperfect words, and lisp his mother's name,
To hail this tree, and say with weeping eyes,
“ Within this plant my hapless parent lies : ”
And when in youth he seeks the shady woods,
O, let him fly the crystal lakes and floods,
Nor touch the fatal flowers ; but, warn'd by me,
Believe a goddess shrined in every tree.
My sire, my sister, and my spouse, farewell !
If in your breasts or love or pity dwell,
Protect your plant, nor let my branches feel
The browsing cattle, or the piercing steel.
Farewell ! and since I cannot bend to join
My lips to yours, advance at least to mine.
My son, thy mother's parting kiss receive,
While yet thy mother has a kiss to give.
I can no more, the creeping rind invades
My closing lips, and hides my head in shades :

Remove your hands ; the bark shall soon suffice,
Without their aid, to seal these dying eyes.'
She ceased at once to speak, and ceased to be,
And all the nymph was lost within the tree :
Yet latent life through her new branches reign'd,
And long the plant a human heat retain'd."

THE STORY OF HERCULES.

HERCULES, a celebrated hero of antiquity, was the son of Jupiter and Alcmena. He was persecuted from his infancy by Juno, who sent two serpents to destroy him when he was only eight months old, but the heroic child seizing them in his hands, crushed them to death. He was for a certain length of time subject to the power of Eurystheus, king of Argos and Mycenæ, an oracle having declared that the younger of the two should be subservient to the elder, and Eurystheus having the priority of birth by two months, cruelly exercised his privilege over Hercules, (of whose fame he was jealous,) by imposing upon him the most dangerous enterprises, commonly known as THE TWELVE LABOURS OF HERCULES. The FIRST, was the destruction of the Nemean lion, which ravaged the country near Mycenæ, and which was invulnerable. Hercules strangled him, and ever after wore his skin as a trophy of his victory. Eurystheus was so astonished at the sight of the monster, and at the courage of Hercules, that he ordered him never to enter the gates of the city when he returned from his expeditions, but to await his orders without the walls. He even caused a brazen vessel, or subterraneous chamber covered with plates of brass to be made, into which he retired whenever Hercules returned. The SECOND LABOUR of Hercules, was the destruction of the Hydra, or serpent of Lerna, a monster with a hundred heads, which infected the country of Argos. In the conflict, as often as he cut off one of its heads, another immediately sprang up in its place, until by the assistance of Iolaus, he seared up the wound in the neck with a firebrand, and thus became victorious. He dipped his arrows in the blood of the monster, which rendered all wounds inflicted by them incurable and mortal. His THIRD EXPLOIT, was to bring alive and unhurt into the presence of Eurystheus, a stag,

famous for its incredible swiftness, its golden horns, and brazen feet. Hercules caught it by tiring it down after a year's pursuit. The **FOURTH LABOUR** imposed upon him, was to bring to Mycenæ a wild boar, which ravaged the neighbourhood of Erymanthus, in Arcadia; on his way he defeated the Centaurs, and at last seized the animal by closely pursuing him through the snow. The **FIFTH LABOUR** of Hercules, was to cleanse the stables of Augeas, king of Elis, in which three thousand oxen had been kept thirty years; this he did in one day, by turning the course of the river Alpheus through them. His **SIXTH LABOUR**, was the destruction of the carnivorous birds, near lake Stymphalus, in Arcadia, whose wings, beaks, and talons, were of iron. His **SEVENTH LABOUR**, was the taming and bringing alive into the Peloponnesus a huge wild bull, which had laid waste the island of Crete. The **EIGHTH LABOUR** required of Hercules, was to obtain the horses of Diomedes, king of Thrace, which fed upon human flesh. He killed Diomedes, and gave him to be eaten by his horses, which he afterwards brought to Eurystheus. His **NINTH LABOUR**, was an expedition against the Amazons, a race of warlike women who dwelt on the banks of the Thermedon, in Pontus, Asia Minor; Hercules overcame them, and obtained the golden girdle of their queen Hippolyte, which Eurystheus required for his daughter Admeta. The **TENTH LABOUR** of Hercules, was the destruction of the monster Geryon, who had three bodies and three heads, and whose carnivorous oxen the hero then drove to Argos. He was required for his **ELEVENTH LABOUR** to obtain the golden apples from the garden of the Hesperides, belonging to Atlas,* king of Africa. The fruit was guarded by a dragon with a hundred heads, and Hercules sustained the heavens upon his shoulders for a short time, while Atlas procured for him the precious fruit. The **TWELFTH** and **LAST LABOUR** demanded of Hercules, was to descend to the infernal regions, and to bring alive upon earth the three headed dog Cerberus. This dangerous exploit he effected, and laid the mastiff at the feet of Eurystheus. He also liberated several of his friends who were confined in the infernal regions, among others

* Atlas, king of Africa, was transformed into the mountain which still bears his name, for refusing to exercise the rites of hospitality to Perseus. The ancients imagined that the heavens rested on the summit of this lofty mountain.

Theseus, Pirithous, &c. &c. Hercules put to death several Giants, among whom was Antæus of Lybia, who was so strong in wrestling, that he boasted he would erect a temple with the skulls of his conquered antagonists. Hercules attacked him, and as Antæus received fresh strength from his mother Terra, (the Earth,) as often as he touched the ground, Hercules lifted him up in the air, and squeezed him to death in his arms. He also put to death Busiris, king of Egypt, who sacrificed all strangers to Jupiter. Hercules assisted the gods in their war against the Giants, and it was owing to him alone that Jupiter was enabled to overcome them. Hercules having been attacked by a dangerous illness, in the course of which he became deranged, was ordered by the Oracle to be sold as a slave, and to remain three years in the most abject servitude, in order to recover from his disorder. Mercury was accordingly commissioned by Jupiter to sell him to Omphale, queen of Lydia, who became enamoured of him and set him at liberty. Hercules also became enamoured of the queen, and in order to please her by complying with her caprices, assumed female attire and spun by her side with her women; while she often playfully struck him with her sandal, to reprove him for the awkward manner in which he held the distaff. She would also sometimes attire herself in his lion's skin, and arm herself with his club. After Hercules had completed the term of his slavery, he returned to Peloponnesus, and some time after married Dejanira, daughter of Eneus, king of Ætolia. Her beauty procured her many admirers, and her father promised to bestow her in marriage on him only who proved to be the strongest of all his competitors. Hercules obtained the prize, having overcome among other rivals, the god of the river Achelous, who assumed the form of a bull. Hercules, after vanquishing him, tore off one of the horns from his head, which the Naiads filled with the various productions of the seasons, and presented to the goddess of Plenty: hence the origin of the Cornu Copiæ, or Horn of Plenty. As Hercules was travelling with his bride, they were stopped in their progress by the swollen streams of the Evenus; the Centaur Nessus offered to convey Dejanira in safety to the opposite shore; but he had no sooner gained the bank than he attempted to carry her off forcibly. Hercules hearing her cries for assistance, aimed one of his poisoned arrows at the Centaur, by which he was mortally wounded. As Nessus was expiring, he gave Dejanira his

tunic, which was stained with his blood, poisoned and infected by the arrow, assuring her that it possessed the power of reclaiming her husband's affections, if at any time she should lose them. Hercules, some time after, became enamoured of Iole, daughter of Eurytus, king of Œchalia, and Dejanira recollecting the alleged powers of the tunic, sent it to him as a present. He had no sooner put it on, than the poison it contained penetrated his bones; he vainly endeavoured to tear it off, and as the pain he suffered was intolerable, he erected a high funeral pile on the top of mount Œta, in Thessaly, and having spread upon it the skin of the Nemæan lion, he laid himself down, reclining his head on his club. He gave his bow and arrows to Philoctetes, after binding him by a solemn oath never to reveal the spot where his ashes were deposited; he then commanded him to set fire to the pile, and was immediately envelopped in flames. When his mortal part was consumed, the altar was suddenly wrapped in a dark cloud of smoke, and Jupiter raised his immortal part to heaven, which elevation was accompanied by loud claps of thunder. His worship soon became as universal as his fame, and Juno, who had once persecuted him with such unrelenting fury, forgot her resentment, and bestowed on him, in the celestial regions, her daughter Hebe* in marriage. Hercules is generally represented naked, or partially covered with the skin of the Nemæan lion, and in his hand he carries a knotted club, on which he frequently reclines. (Hercules is supposed to have lived about 1263 years B. C.)

* Hebe was the daughter of Jupiter and Juno. She was the goddess of youth, and was at one period cup bearer to the gods, but having offended Jupiter, he removed her from her office, and appointed Ganymedes to succeed her. Hebe had the power of restoring both gods and men to the vigour of youth; she is represented as a young and fair virgin, crowned with flowers, and arrayed in a variegated garment. She married Hercules in the celestial regions, after he had been raised to the rank of a god. Ganymedes was a beautiful youth who was taken up to heaven by Jupiter as he was tending his father's flocks on mount Ida, and became the cup-bearer of the gods. He is generally represented sitting on the back of a flying eagle, in the air.

DEATH OF NESSUS THE CENTAUR.

PERHAPS you've heard of Dejanira's* name,
 For all the country spoke her beauty's fame.
 Long was the nymph by numerous suitors woo'd,
 Each with address his envied hopes pursued.
 Alcides† boasts his birth; recounts his spoils,
 His step-dame's hate subdued, and finish'd toils,
 And wins the fair——
 This virgin too, thy love, O Nessus, found;
 To her alone you owe the fatal wound.
 As the strong son of Jove his bride conveys,
 Where his paternal lands their bulwarks raise;
 Where from her slopy urn Evenus pours
 Her rapid current, swell'd by wintry showers,
 He came. The frequent eddies whirl'd the tide,
 And the deep rolling waves all pass denied.
 As for himself, he stood unmoved by fears,
 For now his bridal charge employ'd his cares.
 The strong-limb'd Nessus thus officious cried,
 (For he the shallows of the stream had tried,)
 "Swim thou, Alcides, all thy strength prepare,
 On yonder bank I'll lodge thy nuptial care."
 The Aonian chief‡ to Nessus trusts his wife,
 All pale and trembling for her hero's life.
 Clothed as he stood in the fierce lion's hide,
 The laden quiver o'er his shoulder tied,
 (For cross the stream his bow and club were cast,)
 Swift he plunged in: "These billows shall be pass'd,"
 He said, nor sought where smoother waters glide,
 But stemm'd the rapid dangers of the tide.
 The bank he reach'd, again the bow he bears,
 When, hark! his bride's known voice alarms his ears.
 "Nessus, to thee I call," aloud he cries,
 "Vain is thy trust in flight, be timely wise:
 Think not, perfidious wretch, from me to fly;
 Though wing'd with horses' speed, wounds shall pursue."
 Swift as his words the fatal arrow flew:

* Dejanira; the wife of Hercules.

† Alcides; a name of Hercules, from his grandfather Alcæus.

‡ "The Aonian chief." Bœotia, before the time of Cadmus, was called Aonia; and Hercules was a native of Thebes in Bœotia.

The centaur's back admits the feather'd wood,
 And through his breast the barbed weapon stood,
 Which when, in anguish, through the flesh he tore,
 From both the wounds gush'd forth the streaming gore,
 Mix'd with Lernæan venom ; this he took,
 Nor dire revenge his dying breast forsook ;
 His garment, in the reeking purple died,
 To rouse love's passion, he presents the bride.

THE DEATH OF HERCULES.

Now a long interval of time succeeds,
 When the great son of Jove's immortal deeds,
 And stepdame's hate, had fill'd earth's utmost round,
 He from Œchalia, with new laurels crown'd,
 In triumph was return'd : he rites prepares,
 And to the king of gods directs his prayers :
 When Fame (whom falsehood clothes in truth's disguise,
 And swells her little bulk with growing lies)
 'Thy tender ear, O Dejanira, moved,
 That Hercules the fair Iole loved.
 Her love believes the tale : the truth she fears
 Of his new passion, and gives way to tears.
 The flowing tears diffused her wretched grief,
 " Why seek I thus, from streaming eyes, relief ?"
 She cries ; " indulge not thus these fruitless cares,
 The creature will but triumph in thy tears :
 My wrongs, perhaps, now urge me to pursue
 Some desp'rate deed, by which the world shall view
 How far revenge and woman's rage can rise,
 When weltering in her blood my rival dies."

Thus various passions ruled by turns her breast,
 She now resolves to send the fatal vest,
 Died with Lernæan gore, whose power might move
 His soul anew, and rouse declining love.
 Nor knew she what her sudden rage bestows,
 When she to Lychas trusts her future woes ;

In order to understand the allusions contained in the death of Nessus the Centaur, the death of Hercules, the Apotheosis of Hercules, see story of Hercules, page 181.

With soft endearments she the boy commands
To bear the garment to her husband's hands.

The unwitting hero takes the gift in haste,
And e'er his shoulders Lerna's poison cast :
At first the fire with frankincense he strows,
And utters to the gods his holy vows,
And on the marble altar's polish'd frame
Pours forth the grapy stream ; the rising flame
Sudden dissolves the subtle pois'nous juice,
Which taints his blood, and all his nerves bedews.
With wonted fortitude he bore the smart,
And not a groan confess'd his burning heart ;
At length his patience was subdued by pain,
He rends the sacred altar from the plain.

Cete's wide forests echo with his cries :
Now to rip off the deathful robe he tries ;
Where'er he plucks the vest, the skin he tears,
The mangled muscles and huge bones he bares,
(A ghastly sight !) or raging with his pain,
To rend the sticking plague he cries in vain.

Then, lifting both his hands aloft, he cries,
" Glut thy revenge, dread empress of the skies ;
Sate with my death the rancour of thy heart,
Look down with pleasure, and enjoy my smart.
Or, if e'er pity moved a hostile breast,
(For here I stand thy enemy profess'd,)
Take hence this hateful life, with tortures torn,
Inured to trouble, and to labours born.
Death is the gift most welcome to my wo,
And such a gift a stepdame may bestow.
Was it for this Busiris* was subdued,
Whose barbarous temples reek'd with strangers' blood ?
Press'd in these arms his fate Antæus† found,
Nor gain'd recruited vigour from the ground.
Did I not triple-form'd Geryon‡ fell ?
Or did I fear the triple dog of Hell ?¹
Did not these hands the bull's arm'd forehead hold ?²
Are not our mighty toils in Elis³ told ?
Do not Stymphalian lakes⁴ proclaim my fame ?

* Busiris, † Antæus, ‡ Geryon ; for history of these giants, see story of Hercules, page 181.

¹ Twelfth Labour. ² Seventh Labour. ³ Fifth Labour. ⁴ Sixth Labour. See story of Hercules, page 181.

And fair Parthenian woods resound my name ?
 Who seized the golden belt of Thermodon ?⁵
 And who the dragon-guarded apples won ?⁶
 Could the fierce Centaur's strength my force withstand,
 Or the fell boar⁷ that spoil'd th' Arcadian land ?
 Did not these arms the Hydra's⁸ rage subdue,
 Who from his wounds to double fury grew ?
 What if the Thracian horses,⁹ fat with gore,
 Who human bodies in their mangers tore,
 I saw, and with their barb'rous lord o'erthrew ?
 What if these hands Nemæa's lion slew ?¹⁰
 Did not this neck the heavenly globe sustain ?^{*}
 The female partner of the Thunderer's reign
 Fatigued at length suspends her harsh commands,
 Yet no fatigue hath slack'd these valiant hands.
 But now new plagues pursue me ; neither force,
 Nor arms, nor darts, can stop their raging course.
 Devouring flame through my rack'd entrails strays,
 And on my lungs and shrivell'd muscles preys.
 Yet still Eurystheus ~~breathes~~ the vital air.
 What mortal now shall seek the gods with prayer ?

The hero said ; and, with the torture stung,
 Furious o'er Cete's^{*} lofty hills he sprung.
 Struck with the shaft, thus scours the tiger round,
 And seeks the flying author of his wound.
 Now might you see him trembling, now he vents
 His anguish'd soul in groans and loud laments ;
 He strives to tear the clinging vest in vain,
 And with uprooted forests strows the plain ;
 Now kindling into rage, his hands he rears,
 And to his kindred gods directs his prayers.

⁵ Ninth Labour. ⁶ Eleventh Labour. ⁷ Fourth Labour. ⁸ Second Labour. ⁹ Eighth Labour. ¹⁰ First Labour. See story of Hercules, page 181.

* "Did not this neck the heavenly globe sustain ?" Atlas having been requested by Hercules to procure for him three of the golden apples from the garden of the Hesperides, placed the burden of the heavens upon the hero's shoulders, while he himself went in search of the fruit.

† "Cete's lofty hills." A chain of mountains in Thessaly.

When Lychas,* lo, he spies ; who trembling flew,
 And in a hollow rock conceal'd from view,
 Had shunn'd his wrath. Now grief renew'd his pain,
 His madness chafed, and thus he raves again :
 " Lychas, to thee alone my fate I owe,
 Who bore the gift, the cause of all my wo."
 The youth, all pale, with shiv'ring fear was stung,
 And vain excuses falter'd on his tongue.
 Alcides† snatch'd him, as with suppliant face
 He strove to clasp his knees, and beg for grace :
 He toss'd him o'er his head with airy course,
 And hurl'd with more than with an engine's force :
 Far o'er the Eubœan main aloof he flies,
 And hardens by degrees amid the skies.
 So show'ry drops, when chilly tempests blow,
 Thicken at first, then whiten into snow,
 In balls congeal'd the rolling fleeces bound,
 In solid hail result upon the ground.
 Thus, whirl'd with nervous force through distant air,
 The purple tide forsook his veins with fear ;
 All moisture left his limbs. Transform'd to stone,
 In ancient days the craggy flint was known :
 Still in the Eubœan waves his front he rears,
 Still the small rock in human form appears,
 And still the name of hapless Lychas bears.

THE APOTHEOSIS OF HERCULES.

BUT now the hero of immortal birth
 Fells Cete's forests on the groaning earth ;
 A pile he builds ; to Philoctetes' care
 He leaves his deathful instruments of war ;
 To him commits those arrows, which again
 Shall see the bulwarks of the Trojan reign.
 The son of Pæon* lights the lofty pyre,

* Lychas ; a servant of Hercules, who brought him the poisoned tunic from Dejanira.

† Alcides ; a name given to Hercules, from his grandfather Alcæus.

‡ " The son of Pæon." Philoctetes was the son of Pæon. Hercules gave him his arrows which had been dipped in the blood of the Hy-

High round the structure climbs the greedy fire ;
 Placed on the top, thy nervous shoulders spread
 With the Nemæan spoils, thy careless head
 Raised on the knotty club, with look divine,
 Here thou, dread hero of celestial line,
 Wert stretch'd at ease ; as when a cheerful guest,
 Wine crown'd thy bowls, and flowers thy temples dress'd.
 Now on all sides the potent flames aspire,
 And crackle round those limbs that mock the fire.
 A sudden terror seized the immortal host,
 Who thought the world's profess'd defender lost.
 This when the Thunderer saw, with smiles he cries,
 " 'Tis from your fears, ye gods, my pleasures rise ;
 Joy swells my breast, that my all-ruling hand
 O'er such a grateful people boasts command,
 That you my suffering progeny would aid ;
 Though to his deeds this just respect be paid,
 Me you've obliged. Be all your fears forborne,
 The Ætean fires do thou, great hero, scorn.
 Who vanquish'd all things shall subdue the flame.
 That part alone of gross material frame
 Fire shall devour ; while what from me he drew
 Shall live immortal, and its force subdue.
 That, when he's dead, I'll raise to realms above ;
 May all the powers the righteous act approve !
 If any god dissent, and judge too great
 The sacred honours of the heavenly seat,
 E'en he shall own his deeds deserve the sky,
 E'en he reluctant shall at length comply."
 The assembled powers assent. No frown till now
 Had mark'd with passion vengeful Juno's brow.
 Meanwhile whate'er was in the power of flame
 Was all consumed ; his body's nervous frame
 No more was known ; of human form bereft,
 The eternal part of Jove alone was left.
 As an old serpent casts his scaly vest,
 Writhes in the sun, in youthful glory dress'd,

dra, and in the tenth year of the Trojan war, the Greeks being informed by an oracle that Troy could not be taken without the assistance of those arrows, Ulysses repaired to Philoctetes, and prevailed upon him to accompany him to the siege of that city, where he destroyed an immense number of the enemy with the arrows, and among others, Paris, the author of the war.

So when Alcides mortal mould resign'd,
His better part enlarged, and grew refined ;
August his visage shone ; almighty Jove
In his swift car his honour'd offspring drove ;
High o'er the hollow clouds the coursers fly,
And lodge the hero in the starry sky.

THE STORY OF ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE.

ORPHEUS, a celebrated musician of antiquity, was the son of Apollo and the muse Calliope. He performed upon the lyre with such skill, that to listen to him, rapid rivers ceased to flow, mountains moved, and even savage beasts were tamed by the power of his melody. He married the beautiful nymph Eurydice, but shortly after the celebration of their nuptials, she was stung in the foot by a venomous serpent, and died in consequence of the wound. Orpheus, inconsolable at her loss, determined to attempt her recovery from the infernal regions, whither he immediately repaired, and so charmed Pluto by the melody of his strains, that he consented to allow Eurydice to return with him upon earth, on condition that he forbore looking behind him until he reached the extremest borders of hell. These conditions were gladly accepted ; and Orpheus was already in sight of the upper regions, when, forgetful of his promise, he turned to look at his long-lost Eurydice. He saw her, but she instantly vanished from his view. He attempted to follow her, but was not allowed to re-enter the regions of the dead. Orpheus, in despair, shunned all intercourse with mankind, wandering over mountains, or retiring to grottoes, and endeavouring to forget his misfortune in the charms of music. The coldness and contempt with which he treated the Thracian women, incensed them to such a degree, that meeting him while they were celebrating the orgies of Bacchus,* they attacked him, and after tearing him to pieces, threw his head into the Hebrus, which still continued to murmur the words "Eurydice, Eurydice !" as it was carried down the stream to the Ægean Sea. Bacchus

* Orgies of Bacchus ; rites celebrated in honour of Bacchus, and attended with much violence.

punished the cruelty of the Thracian women by transforming them to trees.

Now, in his saffron robe, for distant Thrace,
Hymen* departs, through air's unmeasured space,
By Orpheus call'd, the nuptial power attends,
But with ill-omen'd augury descends ;
Nor cheerful look'd the god, nor prosperous spoke,
Nor blazed his torch, but wept in hissing smoke.
In vain they whirl it round, in vain they shake,
No rapid motion can its flames awake.

With dread these inauspicious signs were view'd,
And soon a more disastrous end ensued ;
For as the bride, amid the Naiad train,
Ran joyful, sporting o'er the flow'ry plain,
A venom'd viper bit her as she pass'd ;
Instant she fell, and sudden breath'd her last.

When long her loss the Thracian had deplored,
Not by superior powers to be restored,
Inflamed by love, and urged by deep despair,
He leaves the realms of light and upper air,
Daring to tread the dark Tænarian† road,
And tempt the shades in their obscure abode,
Through gliding spectres of the interr'd to go,
And phantom people of the world below :
Persephone‡ he seeks, and him who reigns§
O'er ghosts, and hell's uncomfortable plains.
Arrived, he tuning to his voice his strings,
Thus to the king and queen of shadows sings :

"Ye powers, who under earth your realms extend,
To whom all mortals must one day descend,
If here 'tis granted sacred truth to tell,
I come not curious to explore your hell,
Nor come to boast (by vain ambition fired)

* Hymen, the god of marriage, was the son of Venus, and is generally represented crowned with a wreath of sweet marjoram or roses, bearing in one hand a torch, and in the other a flame-coloured veil.

† Tænarian road ; near Tænarus, a promontory of Laconia, (now Cape Matapan,) was a cave, fabled by the ancients to be one of the entrances to the infernal regions.

‡ Persephone ; Proserpine.

§ "Him who reigns o'er ghosts ;" Pluto, the god of the infernal regions.

How Cerberus* at my approach retired ;
 My wife alone I seek, for her loved sake
 These terrors I support, this journey take :
 She, luckless wandering, or by fate misled,
 Chanced on a lurking viper's crest to tread ;
 The vengeful beast, inflamed with fury, starts,
 And through her heel his deathful venom darts.
 Thus was she snatch'd untimely to her tomb,
 Her growing years cut short, and springing bloom.
 Long I my loss endeavour'd to sustain,
 And strongly strove ; but strove, alas ! in vain ;
 At length I yielded, won by mighty love ;
 Well known is that omnipotence above :
 But here, I doubt, his unfelt influence fails ;
 And yet a hope within my heart prevails,
 That here, e'en here, he has been known of old,
 At least if truth be by tradition told.
 If fame of former loves belief may find,
 You both by love, and love alone, were join'd.
 Now, by the horrors which these realms surround,
 By the vast chaos of these depths profound,
 By the sad silence, which eternal reigns
 O'er all the waste of these wide-stretching plains,
 Let me again Eurydice receive,
 Let fate her quick-spun thread of life re-weave.†
 All our possessions are but loans from you,
 And soon or late you must be paid your due ;
 Hither we haste to human kind's last seat,
 Your endless empire, and our sure retreat.
 She too, when ripen'd years she shall attain,
 Must, of avoidless right, be your's again.
 I but the transient use of that require,
 Which soon, too soon, I must resign entire.
 But if the destinies refuse my vow,
 And no remission of her doom allow,

* Cerberus, the three-headed dog, which guarded the approach to the infernal regions.

† "Let fate her quick-spun thread of life re-weave." The Fates, (or Parcæ,) were three sisters who presided over the life of mankind. Clotho, the youngest, presided over the moment of birth, and held a distaff in her hand; Lachesis, spun out all the events and actions of life, and held a spindle in her hand; while Atropos, the eldest of the three, cut the thread of human existence with a pair of scissors.

Know, I'm determined to return no more ;
So both retain, or both to life restore."

Thus, while the bard melodiously complains,
And to his lyre accords his vocal strains,
The very bloodless shades attention keep,
And silent seem compassionate to weep ;
E'en Tantalus* his flood unthirsty views,
Nor flies the stream, nor he the stream pursues ;
Ixion's† wondering wheel its whirl suspends,
And the voracious vulture, charm'd, attends ;
No more the Belides‡ their toil bemoan,
And Sisyphus,§ reclined, sits listening on his stone.

Then first, ('tis said,) by sacred verse subdued,
The Furies felt their cheeks with tears bedew'd.
Nor could the rigid king or queen of hell
The impulse of pity in their hearts repel.

Now, from a troop of shades that last arrived,
Eurydice was call'd, and stood revived :
Slow she advanced, and halting, seem'd to feel
The fatal wound yet painful in her heel.
Thus he obtains the suit so much desir'd,
On strict observance of the terms requir'd ;

* Tantalus, † Ixion, ‡ Belides, § Sisyphus ; for histories see not page 89. The punishment inflicted on Tantalus and Sisyphus, thus described in the 11th Book of the Odyssey :

" There Tantalus along the Stygian bounds,
Pours out deep groans ; (with groans all hell resounds)
E'en in the circling flood refreshment craves,
And pines with thirst amidst a sea of waves :
When to the water he his lip applies,
Back from his lip the treach'rous water flies.
Above, beneath, around his hapless head,
Trees of all kinds delicious fruitage spread ;
There figs sky-died, a purple hue disclose,
Green looks the olive, the pomegranate glows,
There dangling pears exalted scents unfold,
And yellow apples ripen into gold ;
The fruit he strives to seize : but blasts arise,
Toss it on high, and whirl it to the skies.
I turn'd my eye, and as I turn'd survey'd
A mournful vision! the Sisyphean shade ;
With many a weary step, and many a groan,
Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone ;
The huge round stone resulting with a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the ground,
Again the restless orb his toil renews,
Dust mounts in clouds, while he the toil pursues."

For if, before he reach the realms of air,
He backward cast his eyes to view the fate,
'The forfeit giant, that instant, void is made,
And she for ever left a lifeless shade.

Now through the mazes throng their way they band,
And both with pain the rugged road ascend;
Dark was the path, and difficult, and steep,
And thick with vapours from the smoky deep,
'They well-nigh now had pass'd the bounds of night,
And just approach'd the margin of the light,
When he, mistrusting lest her steps might stray,
And gladdens of the glimpse of dawning day,
His longing eyes impatient backward cast
'To catch a lover's look, but look'd his last;
For, instant dying, she again descends,
While he to empty air his arm extends;
Again she died, nor yet her lord reproved;
What could she say but that too well he loved!
One last farewell she spoke, which scarce he heard;
No soon she dropp'd, so sudden disappear'd.

All stunn'd he stood when thus his wife he view'd,
His second fate and double death subjoin'd;
Now to repass the Styx* in vain he tries;
Charon,† ever, his passing will denie.
Seven days entire, along the infernal shores
Disconsolate, the hard Erydian deplores;
Of rigid fate incessant he complains,
And hell's inexorable gods arraigns.
'This ended, to high Rhodope‡ he hastes,
And Hemus§ mountain, bleak with northern blasts.

And now his yearly race the circling sun
Had thrice complete through watery Peneus|| run,
Since Orpheus fled the face of womankind,
And all communion with the fair declined.
Whate'er the cause, in vain the nymphs contend,
With rival eyes, to warm his frozen breast;

* Styx, a celebrated river of hell.

† Charon, the ferryman of the infernal regions.

‡ Rhodope, a Thracian mountain of Thracia.

§ Hemus, the Thracian, one of the signs of the Zodiac.

For every nymph with love his lays inspired,
But every nymph, repulsed, with grief retired.

A hill there was, and on that hill a mead,
With verdure thick, but destitute of shade ;
Where now, the Muse's son* no sooner sings,
No sooner strikes his sweet-resounding strings,
But distant groves the flying sounds receive,
And listening trees their rooted stations leave ;
Themselves transplanting, all around they grow,
And various shades their various kinds bestow :
Here, tall Chaonian† oaks their branches spread,
While weeping poplars, there, erect their head ;
The food-ful esculus here shoots his leaves ;
That turf, soft lime-trees, this, fat beech receives :
Here, brittle hazels ; laurels, here, advance ;
And there, tough ash, to form the hero's lance :
Here, silver firs, with knotless trunks, ascend ;
There, scarlet oaks beneath their acorns bend :
That spot admits the hospitable plane ;
On this, the maple grows with clouded grain :
Here, watery willows are with lotus seen ;
There, tamarisk, and box, for ever green :
With double hue, here myrtles grace the ground,
And laurustines with purple berries crown'd ;
With pliant feet, now, ivies this way wind,
Vines yonder rise, and elms with vines entwined ;
Wild ornus now, the pitch-tree next, takes root,
And arbutus adorn'd with blushing fruit :
Then easy-bending palms, the victor's prize,
And pines erect with bristly tops arise.

Here the sweet lyrist in a wondrous shade
Of verdant trees, which harmony had made,
Encircled sat, with his own triumphs crown'd,
Of listening birds and savages around.
But now the Bacchanals‡ devoutly mad,
In shaggy skins, like savage creatures, clad,
Warbling in air, perceived his lovely lay,

* " Muse's son." Orpheus was the son of the muse Calliope.

† Chaonian oaks. Chaonia, a district of Epirus, now part of Albania.

‡ Bacchanals ; priestesses of Bacchus, who, at the celebration of his orgies, are represented with wild looks, dishevelled hair, and holding in their hands garlands of ivy, and a thyrsus. They utter dreadful screams, and clash together musical instruments.

And from a rising ground beheld him play ;
When one, the wildest, with dishevell'd hair,
That loosely stream'd and ruffled in the air,
Soon as her frantic eye the lyrist spied,
" See, see, the hater of our sex," she cried ;
Then at his face her missive javelin sent,
Which whizz'd along, and brush'd him as it went ;
But the soft wreaths of ivy twisted round
Prevent a deep impression of the wound.
Another, for a weapon, hurls a stone,
Which by the sound subdued as soon as thrown,
Falls at his feet, and, with a seeming sense,
Implores his pardon for its late offence.
But now their frantic rage unbounded grows,
Turns all to madness, and no measure knows :
Yet this the charms of music might subdue ;
But that, with all its charms, is conquer'd too :
In louder strains their hideous yellings rise,
And squeaking hornpipes echo through the skies ;
Which, in hoarse concert with the drum, confound
The moving lyre, and every gentle sound :
Then 'twas the deafen'd stones flew on with speed,
And saw, unsoothed, their tuneful poet bleed.
The birds, the beasts, and all the savage crew
Which the sweet lyrist to attention drew,
Now by the female mob's more furious rage
Are driven, and forced to quit the shady stage.
Next their fierce hands the bard himself assail,
Nor can his song against their wrath prevail :
They flock like birds, when, in a clustering flight,
By day they chase the boding fowl of night :
So crowded amphitheatres survey
The stag, to greedy dogs a future prey.
Their steely javelins, which soft curls entwine
Of budding tendrils from the leafy vine,
For sacred rites of mild religion made,
Are flung promiscuous at the poet's head.
Those, clods of earth or flints discharge ; and these
Hurl prickly branches, sliver'd from the trees,
And lest their passion should be unsupplied,
The rabble crew, by chance, at distance spied
Where oxen, straining at the heavy yoke,
The fallow'd field with slow advances broke ;
Nigh which the brawny peasants dug the soil,

Procuring food with long laborious toil :
 These, when they saw the ranting throng draw near,
 Quitted their tools, and fled possess'd with fear.
 Long spades, and rakes of mighty size, were found,
 Carelessly left upon the broken ground :
 With these the furious lunatics engage—
 And first the labouring oxen feel their rage ;
 Then to the poet they return with speed,
 Whose fate was, past prevention, now decreed ;
 In vain he lifts his suppliant hands, in vain
 He tries, before, his never-failing strain :
 And from those sacred lips, whose thrilling sound
 Fierce tigers and insensate rocks could wound.
 Ah, gods ! how moving was the mournful sight !
 To see the fleeting soul now take its flight.
 'Twas the soft warblers of the feather'd kind
 Bewail'd ; for thee thy savage audience pined ;
 Those rocks and woods that oft thy strain had led,
 Mourn for their charmer, and lament him dead ;
 And drooping trees their leafy glories shed :
 Naiads,* and Dryads,† with dishevell'd hair,
 Promiscuous weep, and scarfs of sable wear ;
 Nor could the river gods conceal their moan,
 But with new floods of tears augment their own.
 His mangled limbs lay scatter'd all around ;
 His head and harp‡ a better fortune found—
 In Hebrus's§ streams they gently roll'd along,
 And soothed the waters with a mournful song :
 Soft deadly notes the lifeless tongue inspire ;
 A doleful tune sounds from the floating lyre :
 The hollow banks in solemn concert mourn,
 And the sad strain in echoing groans return :
 Now with the current to the sea they glide,
 Borne by the billows of the briny tide,
 And driven where waves round rocky Lesbos roar,
 They strand, and lodge upon Methymna's|| shore.

* Naiads, nymphs who presided over fountains.

† Dryads, nymphs who presided over mountains.

‡ "His harp a better fortune found." The harp, or lyre of Orpheus, became one of the constellations in the heavens, called Lyra.

§ Hebrus' streams. Hebrus, now the Maritza, a river of Thrace, emptying in the Ægean Sea.

|| Methymna's shore. Methymna was a city of Lesbos, an island in the Ægean Sea.

His ghost flies downward to the Stygian shore,
 And knows the places it had seen before ;
 Among the shadows of the pious train
 He finds Eurydice, and loves again ;
 With pleasure views the beauteous phantom's charms,
 And clasps her in his unsubstantial arms :
 There side by side they unmolested walk,
 And pass their blissful hours in pleasing talk.

THE FABLE OF CYPARISSUS TRANSFORMED TO A
 CYPRESS-TREE.

CYPARISSUS, a youth of Cæa (or Ceos) was beloved by Apollo ; but unfortunately killing a favourite stag belonging to the god, he was changed by him into a Cypress-tree.

Amid the throng of a promiscuous wood,
 With pointed top, the taper cypress stood,
 A tree, which once a youth, and heavenly fair,
 Was of that deity* the darling care,
 Whose hand adapts, with equal skill, the strings
 To bows with which he kills, and harps to which he sings.
 For heretofore, a mighty stag was bred,
 Which on the fertile fields of Cæa† fed ;
 In shape and size he all his kind excell'd,
 And to Carthæan‡ nymphs was sacred held :
 His beamy head, with branches high display'd,
 Afforded to itself an ample shade ;
 His horns were gilt, and his smooth neck was graced
 With silver collars thick with gems enchased ;
 A silver boss upon his forehead hung,
 And brazen pendants in his ear-rings rung ;
 Frequenting houses he familiar grew,
 And learn'd, by custom, nature to subdue,

* " Was of that deity." Apollo. He presided over archery and music.

† Cæa, or Ceos, now Zia, an island in the Ægean Sea ; one of the Cyclades.

‡ Carthæan nymphs. Nymphs who resided in Carthæa, a city of Cæa.

Till by degrees, of fear and wildness broke,
E'en stranger hands his proffer'd neck might stroke.

Much was the stag by Cæa's youth caress'd,
But thou, sweet Cyparissus, lovedst him best;
By thee, to pastures fresh, he oft was led,
By thee oft water'd at the fountain's head;
His horns with garlands, now, by thee were tied,
And, now, thou on his back wouldst playful ride;
Now here, now there, wouldst bound along the plains,
Ruling his tender mouth with purple reins.

'Twas when the summer sun, at noon of day,
Through glowing Cancer shot his burning ray,
'Twas then, the fav'rite stag, in cool retreat,
Had sought a shelter from the scorching heat:
Along the grass his weary limbs he laid,
Inhaling freshness from the breezy shade,
When Cyparissus, with his pointed dart,
Unknowing, pierced him to the panting heart;
But when the youth, surprised, his error found,
And saw him dying of the cruel wound,
Himself he would have slain through desperate grief;
What said not Phœbus,* that might yield relief:
To cease his mourning he the boy desired,
Or mourn no more than such a loss required;
But he incessant grieved. At length address'd
To the superior powers a last request;
Praying, in expiation of his crime
Thenceforth to mourn to all succeeding time.

And now of blood exhausted he appears,
Drain'd by a torrent of continual tears;
The fleshy colour in his body fades,
And a green tincture all his limbs invades:
From his fair head, where curling locks late hung,
A horrid bush with bristled branches sprung,
Which, stiffening by degrees, its stem extends,
Till to the starry skies the spire ascends.

Apollo sad look'd on, and sighing, cried:
"Then, be for ever what thy prayer implied,
Bemoan'd by me, in others grief excite,
And still preside at every funeral rite!"

* Phœbus, a name given to Apollo.

THE STORY OF HYACINTHUS TRANSFORMED TO A FLOWER.

HYACINTHUS, a beautiful youth, was the favourite of Apollo, by whom he was accidentally killed while playing at quoits. The deity, unable to restore him to life, and disconsolate at his death, changed his body into the flower which still continues to bear his name, and on whose petals the Grecians fancied they saw the notes of grief, *Al, Ai*, inscribed. A festival called the Hyacinthia was celebrated for three days in each year at Sparta, in honour of Apollo and his favourite.

Phœbus for thee, fair Hyacinth, design'd
A place among the gods, had fate been kind :
Yet this he gave : as oft as wintry rains
Are pass'd, and vernal breezes soothe the plains,
From the green turf a purple flower you rise,
And with your fragrant breath perfume the skies.
You, when alive, were Phœbus' darling boy ;
In you he placed his hopes and fix'd his joy ;
Their god the Delphic priests* consult in vain ;
Eurotas† now he loves, and Sparta's plain :
His hands the use of bow and harp forget,
And hold the dogs, or bear the corded net ;
O'er hanging cliffs swift he pursues the game ;
Each hour his pleasure, each augments his flame.

The mid-day sun now shone with equal light
Between the past and the succeeding night ;
They strip, then, smooth'd with suppling oil, essay
To pitch the rounded quoit, their wonted play.
A well-poised disk first hasty Phœbus threw ;
It cleft the air, and whistled as it flew ;
It reach'd the mark, a most surprising length,
Which spoke an equal share of art and strength.
Scarce was it fallen, when, with too eager hand,
Young Hyacinth ran to snatch it from the sand ;

* Delphic priests. At Delphi, a city of Phocis, in Greece, was a celebrated oracle in honour of Apollo. (For description see note Delphic Oracles, page 47.)

† Eurotas, a river of Laconia, on which the city of Sparta, now Palæo-Castro, is situated.

But the curs'd orb, which met a stony soil,
 Flew in his face with violent recoil.
 Both faint, both pale and breathless, now appear,
 The boy with pain, the anxious god with fear.
 He ran, and raised him bleeding from the ground,
 Chafes his cold limbs, and wipes the fatal wound ;
 Then herbs of noblest juice in vain applies ;
 The wound is mortal, and his skill defies.

As in a water'd garden's blooming walk,
 When some rude hand has bruised its tender stalk,
 A fading lily droops its languid head,
 And bends to earth, its life and beauty fled ;
 So Hyacinth, with head reclined, decays,
 And, sickening, now no more his charms displays.

"Oh, thou art gone, my boy," Apollo cried,
 "Defrauded of thy youth in all its pride !
 Thou, once my joy, art all my sorrow now ;
 And to my guilty hand my grief I owe.
 Yet from myself I might the fault remove,
 Unless to sport and play a fault should prove,
 Oh could I for thee, or but with thee, die !
 But cruel fates to me that power deny :
 Yet on my tongue thou shalt for ever dwell ;
 Thy name my lyre shall sound, my verse shall tell ;
 And to a flower transform'd, unheard of yet,
 Stamp'd on thy leaves, my cries thou shalt repeat : *
 The time shall come, prophetic I foreknow,
 When, join'd to thee, a mighty chief shall grow,†
 And with my plaints his name thy leaf shall show."

* "Stamp'd on thy leaves, my cries thou shalt repeat." On the petals of the Hyacinth the Grecians fancied they saw the notes of grief *Αι. Αι.* inscribed.

† "When join'd to thee a mighty chief shall grow,
 And with my plaints his name thy leaf shall show."

These lines refer to the fate of Ajax ; who having stabbed himself, the blood which issued from the wound was changed into the Hyacinth, or Martagon lily, which flower is spotted occasionally with dots resembling the letters *Αι. Αι.* (the notes of lamentation for the death of Hyacinthus, and half the name of Ajax.) Ovid thus refers to this circumstance in "The death of Ajax."

The fruitful blood produced a flower, which grew
 On a green stem, and of a purple hue :
 Like his, whom unaware Apollo slew :
 Inscribed on both, the letters are the same,
 But those express the grief, and these the name.

While Phœbus thus the laws of fate reveal'd,
Behold, the blood which stain'd the verdant field
Is blood no longer ; but a flower full-blown,
Far brighter than the Tyrian scarlet, shone :
A lily's form it took ; its purple hue
Was all that made a difference to the view ;
Nor stopp'd he here : the god upon its leaves
The sad expression of his sorrow weaves ;
And to this hour the mournful purple wears
Xi, Xi, inscribed in funeral characters.
Nor are the Spartans, who so much are famed
For virtue, of their Hyacinth ashamed,
But still, with pompous wo and solemn state,
The Hyacinthian feasts* they yearly celebrate.

 THE FABLE OF MIDAS.

MIDAS, king of Phrygia, having hospitably and kindly entertained Silenus, the preceptor and companion of Bacchus, was allowed by the god to choose whatever recompense he pleased. He had the imprudence and the avarice to demand that whatever he should touch might be turned into gold. His prayer was granted, but he was soon convinced of the folly of his choice, for, when attempting to raise to his lips the food which was placed on his table, it was suddenly converted into gold ; in like manner, when wishing to quench his thirst, the sparkling fluid was changed into a golden stream. Horror-struck, he entreated Bacchus to recall his fatal boon, to which the god kindly consented, and for this purpose ordered Midas to bathe in the river Pactolus, whose sands (say the poets) were ever after tinctured with golden particles.

Where the smooth streams of clear Pactolus† roll'd,
Then undistinguish'd for its sands of gold,

* "Hyacinthian feasts." The Spartans annually celebrated festivals called Hyacinthia, in honour of Hyacinthus, who was the nephew of their king.

† Pactolus, a river of Lydia, in Asia Minor.

The satyrs* with the nymphs, (the usual throng
That wait on Bacchus,) gaily danced along ;
Silenus† only miss'd ; for while he reel'd,
Feeble with age and wine, about the field,
The hoary drunkard had forgot his way,
And to the Phrygian clowns became a prey ;
Who to king Midas drag the captive god,
While on his totty pate the wreaths of ivy nod.

Midas from Orpheus had been taught his lore,
And knew the rites of Bacchus long before :
He, when he saw his venerable guest,
In honour of the god ordain'd a feast.
Ten days in course, with each continued night,
Were spent in genial mirth and brisk delight ;
Then on the eleventh, when, with brighter ray,
Phosphor‡ had chased the fading stars away,
The king through Lydia's fields young Bacchus sought,
And to the god his foster-father brought.
Pleased with the welcome sight, he bids him soon
But name his wish, and swears to grant the boon,
A glorious offer ! yet but ill bestow'd .
On him whose choice so little judgment show'd.
" Give me," said he, (nor thought he ask'd too much,)
" That with my body whatsoe'er I touch,
Changed from the nature which it held of old,
May be converted into yellow gold."
He had his wish : but yet the god repined,
To think the fool no better wish could find.

But the brave king departed from the place
With smiles of gladness sparkling in his face ;
Nor could contain, but, as he took his way,
Impatient longs to make the first essay.
Down from a lowly branch a twig he drew,
The twig straight glitter'd with a golden hue :
He takes a stone, the stone was turn'd to gold :

* Satyrs ; attendants of Bacchus ; they resided in forests, and are represented with deformed heads armed with short horns ; crooked hands, rough and hairy bodies, goats' feet and legs, and a long tail.

† Silenus ; the foster-father, preceptor, and constant attendant of Bacchus.

‡ Phosphor ; a name applied to the planet Venus, when it rises in the morning before the sun ; when it sets after the sun in the evening it is denominated Hesperus, Vesper, or the Evening Star.

A clod he touches, and the crumbling mould
 Acknowledged soon the great transforming power
 In weight and substance like a mass of ore :
 He pluck'd the corn, and straight his grasp appears
 Fill'd with a bending tuft of golden ears.
 An apple next he takes, and seems to hold
 The bright Hesperian* vegetable gold :
 His hand he careless on a pillar lays,
 With shining gold the fluted pillars blaze ;
 And, while he washes, as the servants pour,
 His touch converts the stream to Danæ's† shower.

To see these miracles so finely wrought
 Fires with transporting joy his giddy thought.
 The ready slaves prepare a sumptuous board,
 Spread with rich dainties for their happy lord ;
 Whose powerful hands the bread no sooner hold,
 But its whole substance is transform'd to gold :
 Up to his mouth he lifts the savoury meat,
 Which turns to gold as he attempts to eat ;
 His patron's noble juice of purple hue,
 Touch'd by his lips, a gilded cordial grew,
 Unfit for drink ; and, wondrous to behold,
 It trickles from his lips a fluid gold.

The rich poor fool, confounded with surprise,
 Starving in all his various plenty lies ;
 Sick of his wish, he now detests the power
 For which he ask'd so earnestly before ;
 Amid his gold with pinching famine cursed,
 And justly tortured with an equal thirst :
 At last, his shining arms to heaven he rears,
 And in distress, for refuge flies to prayers.
 " Oh, Father Bacchus, I have sinn'd," he cried,
 " And, foolishly thy gracious gift applied ;
 Thy pity now, repenting, I implore,
 Oh may I feel the golden plague no more !"

The hungry wretch, his folly thus confess'd,
 Touch'd the kind deity's good-natured breast ;
 The gentle god annull'd his first decree,
 And from the cruel compact set him free.

* Hesperian. The fruit of the garden of the Hesperides, belonging to Atlas, king of Mauritania, was of gold.

† Danæ's shower. Jupiter changed himself into a golden shower, in order to gain access to Danæ. See story of Perseus, page 86.

206 CONTEST IN MUSIC BETWEEN APOLLO AND PAN.

But then, to cleanse him quite from further harm,
And to dilute the relics of the charm,
He bids him seek the stream, that cuts the land
Nigh where the towers of Lydian Sardis stand ;
Then trace the river to the fountain head
And meet it rising from its rocky bed ;
There, as the bubbling tide pours forth amain,
To plunge his body in, and wash away the stain.
The king, instructed, to the fount retires,
But with the golden charm the stream inspires ;
For, while this quality the man forsakes,
An equal power the limpid water takes ;
Informs with veins of gold the neighbouring land,
And glides along a bed of golden sand.

THE CONTEST IN MUSIC BETWEEN APOLLO AND PAN, AND
THE DECISION OF MIDAS.

PAN, a sylvan deity, had the presumption to challenge Apollo to a trial of skill in music. Midas, king of Phrygia, awarded the prize to Pan, for which judgment Apollo changed his ears into those of an ass, in token of his ignorance and stupidity. This disgrace the king anxiously endeavoured to conceal, but as it was impossible to hide it from his barber, he charged him in the most solemn manner, never to reveal what he had seen. The man promised obedience, but finding himself incapable of keeping the secret, he dug a hole in the ground, and applying his mouth closely to it, whispered, "King Midas has the ears of an ass." Some reeds shortly after sprang up from the place, and whenever they were agitated by the wind, uttered very distinctly the words, "King Midas has the ears of an ass ;" thus betraying the important secret.

Now loathing wealth, the occasion of his woes,*
Far in the woods king Midas sought repose ;

* "Now loathing wealth the occasion of his woes." See Fable of Midas, page 203.

In caves and grottoes, where the nymphs resort,
And keep with mountain Pan* their sylvan court.
Ah! had he left his stupid soul behind;
But his condition altered not his mind.

For where high Tmolus† rears his shady brow,
And from his cliffs surveys the seas below
In his descent, by Sardis bounded here,
By the small confines of Hypæpa there,
Pan to the nymphs his frolic ditties play'd,
Tuning his reeds beneath the checker'd shade.
The nymphs are pleased, the boasting sylvan plays,
And speaks with slight of great Apollo's lays.
Tmolus was arbiter; the boaster still
Accepts the trial with unequal skill.
The venerable judge was seated high
On his own hill, that seem'd to touch the sky.
Above the whispering trees his head he rears,
From their encumbering boughs to free his ears;
A wreath of oak alone his temples bound,
The pendant acorns loosely dangled round.
"In me, your judge," said he, "there's no delay;"
Then bids the goatherd god begin and play.
Pan tuned his pipe, and with his rural song
Pleased the low taste of all the vulgar throng.
Such songs a vulgar judgment mostly please,
Midas was there, and Midas judged with these.

The mountain sire, with grave deportment, now
To Phœbus‡ turns his venerable brow;
And, as he turns, with him the listening wood
In the same posture of attention stood.
The god his own Parnassian laurel§ crown'd,
And in a wreath his golden tresses bound;
Graceful his purple mantle swept the ground.
High on the left his ivory lute he raised;
The lute, emboss'd with glittering jewels, blazed;
In his right hand he nicely held the quill,
His easy posture spoke a master's skill;

* Pan, the god of shepherds. See note Pan, page 26.

† Tmolus, a mountain of Lydia, in Asia Minor, now Bourdag, or the cold mountain.

‡ Phœbus, a name given to Apollo.

§ "Parnassian laurel." The laurel was sacred to Apollo. The favourite residence of Apollo was on mount Parnassus, a mountain of Phocis, in Greece.

The strings he touched with more than human art,
Which pleased the judge's ear, and soothed his heart ;
Who soon judiciously the palm decreed,
And to the lute postponed the squeaking reed.

All, with applause, the rightful sentence heard,
Midas alone dissatisfied appear'd ;
To him unjustly given the judgment seems,
For Pan's barbaric notes he most esteems.
The lyric god, who thought his untuned ear
Deserved but ill a human form to wear,
Of that deprives him, and supplies the place
With some more fit, and of an ampler space,
Fix'd on his noddle an unseemly pair,
Flagging, and large, and full of whitish hair ;
Without a total change from what he was,
Still in the man preserves the simple ass.

He, to conceal the scandal of the deed,
A purple turban folds about his head,
Veils the reproach from public view, and fears
The laughing world would spy his monstrous ears.
One trusty barber slave, that used to dress
His master's hair when lengthen'd to excess,
The mighty secret knew, but knew alone,
And, though impatient, durst not make it known.
Restless, at last a private place he found,
And dug a hole, and told it to the ground ;
In a low whisper he reveal'd the case,
Then cover'd in the earth, and silent left the place.

In time, of trembling reeds a plenteous crop
From the confided furrow sprouted up,
Which, high advancing with the ripening year,
Made known the tiller, and his fruitless care ;
For then the rustling blades and whispering wind
To tell the important secret both combined.

THE STORY OF PYGMALION AND THE STATUE.

PYGMALION, a celebrated statuary of the island of Cyprus, was a professed woman-hater, and determined never to marry ; but having sculptured an exquisite female statue, he became enamoured of his own creation, and at his earnest

intercession and prayer Venus animated the fair image, which, when endued with life, he married.

Pygmalion, hating wedded life,
Abhorr'd all woman-kind, but most a wife,
So single chose to live :—
Yet fearing idleness, the nurse of ill,
In sculpture exercis'd his happy skill,
And carved in ivory such a maid, so fair,
As nature could not with his art compare,
Were she to work ; but, in her own defence,
Must take her pattern here, and copy hence.
Pleased with his idol, he commends, admires,
Adores !——

A very virgin in her face was seen,
And had she moved, a living maid had been :
One would have thought she could have stirr'd, but strove
With modesty, and was ashamed to move :
Art hid with art, so well perform'd the cheat,
It caught the carver with his own deceit :
He knows 'tis madness, yet he must adore,
And still the more he knows it, loves the more.
With flattery now he seeks her mind to move,
And now with gifts, the powerful bribes of love :
He furnishes her closet first, and fills
The crowded shelves with rarities of shells ;
Adds orient pearls, which from the conchs he drew,
And all the sparkling stones of various hue ;
And parrots, imitating human tongue,
And singing birds, in silver cages hung ;
And every fragrant flower and odorous green
Were sorted well, with gems of amber laid between ;
Rich fashionable robes her person deck,
Pendants her ears, and pearls adorn her neck :
Her taper fingers too with rings are graced,
And an embroider'd zone surrounds her slender waist.
Thus like a queen array'd, so richly dress'd,
Beauteous she look'd.——

The feast of Venus came, a solemn day,
To which the Cypriots* due devotion pay ;

* Cypriots, inhabitants of the island of Cyprus, where Venus was worshipped with great solemnity.

With gilded horns the milk-white heifers led,
Slaughter'd before the sacred altars bled.

Pygmalion offering, first approach'd the shrine,
And then with prayers implored the powers divine :
Almighty gods, if all we mortals want,
If all we can require, be yours to grant,
Make this fair statue mine, he would have said,
But changed his words for shame, and only pray'd,
" Give me the likeness of my ivory maid."

The golden goddess, present at the prayer,
Well knew he meant th' inanimated fair,
And gave the sign of granting his desire ;
For thrice in cheerful flames ascends the fire.
The youth, returning to his statue hies,
And confident in hope, with ardent eyes
And beating breast, to the dear image flies.
He kisses her white lips, renews the bliss,
And looks, and thinks they redden at the kiss.
And now the waken'd image oped her eyes,
And view'd at once the light and lover with surprise.
The goddess present at the match she made,
Now bless'd them both, to whom their vows they paid.

THE STORY OF VENUS AND ADONIS.

ADONIS was a beautiful youth to whom Venus was passionately attached. He was extremely fond of hunting, and the goddess anxious for his safety, frequently cautioned him against this dangerous amusement ;—but in vain. One day, while engaged in the chase, he was attacked and killed by a wild boar. Venus, inconsolable for his loss, sprinkled with nectar the ground stained with his blood, whence the anemone or *wind-flower* immediately sprang up, which, by its fragile nature, expresses the brief period of life enjoyed by her beautiful favourite.

The fair Adonis born with every grace,
Charm'd even Venus with his beauteous face ;
His form was such as painters when they show
Their utmost art, on naked loves bestow ;

And that their arms no difference might betray,
 Give him a bow, or Cupid's take away.
 Time glides along with undiscover'd haste,
 The future but a length behind the past,
 So swift are years!
 The babe, a boy—a beauteous youth appears,
 And lovelier than himself at riper years.
 Now Cytherea's* lips while Cupid press'd,
 He with a heedless arrow razed her breast:
 The goddess felt it, and, with fury stung,
 The wanton mischief from her bosom flung:
 Yet thought at first the danger slight; but found
 The dart too faithful, and too deep the wound.
 Fired with a mortal beauty, she disdains
 To haunt the Idalian† mount or Phrygian plains:
 She seeks not Cnidos,‡ nor her Paphian§ shrines,
 Nor Amathus,|| that teems with brazen mines:
 E'en heaven itself, with all its sweets unsought,
 Adonis far a sweeter heaven is thought:
 On him she hangs, and fonda with every art,
 And never, never knows from him to part.
 She whose soft limbs had only been display'd
 On rosy beds, beneath the myrtle shade,
 Whose pleasing care was to improve each grace,
 And add more charms to an unrivall'd face,
 Now buskin'd, like the virgin huntress,¶ goes
 Through woods, and pathless wilds, and mountain snows:
 With her own tuneful voice she joys to cheer
 The panting hounds, that chase the flying deer:
 She runs the labyrinth of fearful hares;
 But fearless beasts and dangerous prey forbears;
 Hunts not the grinning wolf or foamy boar,
 And trembles at the lion's angry roar.
 These too, Adonis, with a lover's care,
 She warns, if warn'd, thou wouldst avoid the snare:

* Cytherea; a name given to Venus.

† Idalian mount; a height and grove of Cyprus. It was the favourite residence of Venus.

‡ Cnidos, a city of Doris in Caria, Asia Minor. It was particularly celebrated for its worship of Venus.

§ Paphian shrines. Venus was worshipped with great solemnity at Paphos, a city in the island of Cyprus.

|| Amathus, a city of Cyprus, where Venus was worshipped.

¶ Virgin huntress, Diana.

"To furious animals advance not nigh;
 Fly those that follow, follow those that fly;
 'Tis chance alone must the survivors save,
 Whene'er brave spirits will attempt the brave.
 Oh, lovely youth! in harmless sports delight;
 Provoke not beasts, which, arm'd by nature, fight:
 For me, if not thyself, vouchsafe to fear;
 Let not thy thirst of glory cost me dear.
 Boars know not how to spare a blooming age;
 No sparkling eyes can soothe the lion's rage:
 Nor all thy charms a savage breast can move,
 Which have so deeply touch'd the queen of love.
 When bristled boars from beaten thickets spring,
 In grinded tusks a thunderbolt they bring:
 The daring hunters lions roused devour;
 Vast is their fury, and as vast their power.
 But thou, Adonis, my delightful care,
 Of these, and beasts as fierce as these, beware!
 The savage, which not shuns thee, timely shun;
 For by rash prowess shouldst thou be undone,
 A double ruin is contained in one."

Thus cautious Venus school'd her favourite boy;
 But youthful heat all cautions will destroy.
 His sprightly soul beyond grave counsel flies,
 While with yoked swans the goddess cuts the skies.
 His faithful hounds, led by the tainted wind,
 Lodged in thick coverts chanced a boar to find.
 The callow hero show'd a manly heart,
 And pierced the savage with a sidelong dart:
 The flying savage, wounded, turn'd again,
 Wrench'd out the gory dart, and foam'd with pain.
 The trembling boy by flight his safety sought,
 And now recall'd the lore which Venus taught:
 But now, too late, to fly the boar he strove,
 Who in the flesh his tusks impetuous drove:
 On the discolour'd grass Adonis lay—
 The monster trampling o'er his beauteous prey.

Fair Cytherea,* Cyprus scarce in view,
 Heard from afar his groans, and own'd them true,
 And turn'd her snowy swans, and backward flew.
 But as she saw him gasp his latest breath,

* Cytherea, Venus.

And quivering agonize in pangs of death,
 Down with swift flight she plunged, nor rage forbore,
 At once her garments and her hair she tore :
 With cruel blows she beat her guiltless breast,
 The fates upbraided, and her love confess'd.
 "Nor shall they yet," she cried, "the whole devour,
 With uncontroll'd inexorable power.
 For thee, lost youth, my tears and restless pain
 Shall in immortal monuments remain :
 With solemn pomp, in annual rites* return'd,
 Be thou for ever, my Adonis, mourn'd.
 Could Pluto's queen† with jealous fury storm,
 And Menthe‡ to a fragrant herb transform ?
 Yet dares not Venus with a change surprise,
 And bid in a fair flower her hero rise ?"
 Then on the blood sweet nectar she bestows—
 The scented blood in little bubbles rose ;
 Little as rainy drops, which fluttering fly,
 Borne by the winds, along a lowering sky.
 Short time ensued, till where the blood was shed,
 A flower began to rear its purple head ;
 Such as on Punic apples is reveal'd,
 Or in the filmy rind but half conceal'd.
 Still here the fate of lovely forms we see,
 So sudden fades the sweet anemone :
 The feeble stems, to stormy blasts a prey,
 Their sickly beauties droop, and pine away :
 The winds forbid the flowers to flourish long,
 Which owe to winds§ their name in Grecian song.

* In annual rites, &c. Festivals, called Adonia, were celebrated annually, in honour of Adonis, in most of the Grecian cities.

† Pluto's queen. Proserpine discovering that Pluto was enamoured of Menthe,‡ changed her into an herb, called by the same name, *mint*.

§ "Which owe to winds their names." The anemone or *wind flower* never opens its petals but when the wind blows, whence its name. Bion, in his Idyll entitled "The death of Adonis," thus describes the tears of Venus, (shed for the death of her favourite,) and the blood of Adonis changed to flowers :

"As many drops of blood as from the wound
 Of fair Adonis trickled on the ground,
 So many tears she shed in copious showers :
 Both tears and drops of blood were turn'd to flowers.
 From these in crimson beauty sprung the rose ;
 Cerulean bright anemonies from those."

THE STORY OF HIPPOMENES AND ATALANTA, RELATED BY
VENUS.

ATALANTA, a nymph of Arcadia, was celebrated for her swiftness in running. Her beauty having gained her many admirers, she proposed that her suitors should run a race with her, promising to bestow her hand on him who should outstrip her, but at the same time insisting that the unsuccessful candidates should be put to death. As her fleetness was almost incredible, many of her lovers perished in their attempt to win her: at length Hippomenes offered himself as one of the competitors. Venus, (to whom he had breathed a prayer for aid,) presented him with three golden apples; these, as soon as he had started in the course, he artfully threw on the ground at a little distance from each other, and while Atalanta, charmed at their sight, stooped to pick them up, Hippomenes hastened on, arrived first at the goal, won the prize, and obtained the nymph in marriage.

Perhaps thou may'st have heard a virgin's name,
Who still in swiftness swiftest youths o'ercame.
Wondrous, that female weakness should outdo
A manly strength; the wonder yet is true.
'Twas doubtful if her triumphs in the field
Did to her form's triumphant glories yield;
Whether her face could with more ease decoy
A crowd of lovers, or her feet destroy:
Not sighing suitors could her pity move;
She bade them show their speed to show their love.
He only who could conquer in the race,
Might in the conquer'd maiden's eyes find grace;
While he whose tardy feet had lagg'd behind,
Was doom'd the sad reward of death to find.
Though great the prize, yet rigid the decree;
But blind with beauty, who can rigour see?
E'en on these laws the fair they rashly sought,
And danger in excess of love forgot.
"There sat Hippomenes, prepared to blame
In lovers such extravagance of flame.
'And must,' he said, 'the blessing of a wife
Be dearly purchased by a risk of life?"

But when he saw the wonders of her face,
And well-turn'd limbs, as springing to the race,
With lifted hands, he cried, 'Forgive the tongue
Which durst, ye youths, your well-timed courage wrong :
I knew not that the nymph for whom you strove,
Deserved the unbounded transports of your love.'
He saw, admired, and thus her spotless frame
He praised, and praising, kindled his own flame.
A rival now to all the youths who run,
Envious, he fears they should not be undone.
'But why,' reflects he, 'idly thus is shown
The fate of others, yet untried my own ?
The coward must not on love's aid depend ;
The god was ever to the bold a friend.'
Meantime the virgin flies, or seems to fly,
Swift as a Scythian arrow cleaves the sky :
Still more and more the youth her charms admires,
The race itself to exalt her charms conspires.
The golden pinions, which her feet adorn,
In wanton flutterings by the winds are borne :
Down from her head the long fair tresses flow,
And sport with lovely negligence below :
The waving ribands, which her buskins tie,
Her snowy skin with waving purple die ;
As crimson veils in palaces display'd,
To the white marble lend a blushing shade.
Nor long he gazed, yet while he gazed, she gain'd
The goal, and the victorious wreath obtain'd.
The vanquish'd sigh, and as the law decreed,
Pay the dire forfeit, and prepare to bleed.
"Then rose Hippomenes, not yet afraid,
And fix'd his eyes full on the beauteous maid.
'Where is,' he cried, 'the mighty conquest won,
To distance those who want the nerve to run ?
Here prove superior strength ; nor shall it be
Thy loss of glory, if excell'd by me.
High my descent ; near Neptune I aspire,
For Neptune was grand parent to my sire :
From that great god the fourth myself I trace,
Nor sink my virtues yet beneath my race.
Thou from Hippomenes, o'ercome, mayst claim
An envied triumph, and a deathless fame.'
"While thus the youth the virgin's power defies,
Silent she views him still with softer eyes :

Thoughts in her breast a doubtful strife begin,
 If 'tis not happier now to lose than win.
 What god, a foe to beauty, would destroy
 The youthful promise of this blooming boy?
 'With his life's danger, me, he seeks to wed,
 Scarce am I half so greatly worth,' she said.
 'Nor has his beauty moved my breast to love;
 And yet, I own, such beauty well might move;
 'Tis not his charms, 'tis pity would engage
 My soul to spare the greenness of his age.
 What, that heroic courage fires his breast,
 And shines through brave disdain of fate confess'd?
 What, though his parentage by close degrees
 Springs from the imperial ruler of the seas?
 Then add the love, which bids him undertake
 The race, and dare to perish for my sake.
 Of famed Atalanta, heedless youth, beware!
 Fly, timely fly, from a too barb'rous fair.
 At pleasure choose: thy love will be repaid
 By a less foolish and more beauteous maid.
 But why this tenderness, before unknown?
 Why beats and pants my breast for him alone?
 His eyes have seen his numerous rivals yield;
 Let him too share the rigour of the field,
 Since, by their fates untaught, his own he courts,
 And thus with ruin insolently sports.
 Yet for what crime shall he his death receive?
 Is it a crime with me to wish to live?
 Shall his kind passion his destruction prove?
 Is this the fatal recompense of love?
 So fair a youth destroy'd, would conquest shame,
 And nymphs eternally detest my fame.
 Still why should nymphs my guiltless fame upbraid?
 Did I the fond adventurer persuade?
 Alas! I wish thou wouldst the course decline,
 Or that my swiftness was excell'd by thine.
 See what a virgin's bloom adorns the boy!
 Why wilt thou run, and why thyself destroy?
 Hippomenes! oh that I ne'er had been
 By those bright eyes unfortunately seen!
 Ah! tempt not thus a swift untimely fate;
 Thy life is worthy of the longest date.'
 "Thus she disclosed the woman's secret heart,
 Young, innocent, and new to Cupid's dart.

Her thoughts, her words, her actions, wildly rove,
'Tis love she feels, yet knows not that 'tis love.

Her royal sire now with the murmuring crow'd,
Demands the race impatiently aloud.

Hippomenes then with true fervour pray'd :

'My bold attempt let Venus kindly aid :

By her sweet power I felt this amorous fire ;

Still may she succour whom she did inspire.'

A soft unenvious wind, with speedy care,

Wafted to heaven the lover's tender prayer.

Pity, I own, soon gain'd the wish'd consent,

And all the assistance he implored I lent.

The Cyprian lands, though rich, in richness yield

To that surnamed the Tamasenian* field :

That field of old was added to my shrine,

And its choice products consecrated mine :

A tree there stands, full glorious to behold,

Gold are the leaves, the crackling branches gold ;

It chanced, three apples in my hands I bore,

Which newly from the tree I sportive tore ;

Seen by the youth alone, to him I brought

The fruit, and when and how to use it taught.

The signal sounding by the king's command,

Both start at once, and sweep the imprinted sand :

So swiftly moved their feet, they might with ease

Scarce moisten'd, skim along the glassy seas ;

Or, with a wondrous levity be borne

O'er yellow harvests of unbending corn.

Now favouring peals resound from every part,

Spirit the youth, and fire his fainting heart.

'Hippomenes !' they cried, 'thy life preserve,

Intensely labour, and stretch every nerve :

Base fear alone can baffle thy design ;

Shoot boldly onward, and the goal is thine.'

'Tis doubtful whether shouts like these convey'd

More pleasure to the youth or to the maid.

When a long distance oft she could have gain'd,

She check'd her swiftness, and her feet restrain'd :

She sigh'd, and dwelt, and languish'd on his face,

Then with unwilling speed pursued the race.

O'erspent with heat, his breath he faintly drew,

* Tamasenian field. In the vicinity of Tamasus, (or Tamaseus,) a city of Cyprus, was a celebrated plain sacred to Venus.

Parch'd was his mouth, nor yet the goal in view,
And the first apple on the plain he threw.
The nymph stopp'd sudden at the unusual sight,
Struck with the fruit so beautifully bright.
Aside she starts, the wonder to behold,
And eager stoops to catch the rolling gold.
The observant youth pass'd by, and scour'd along,
While peals of joy rung from the applauding throng.
Unkindly she corrects the short delay,
And to redeem the time fleets swift away,
Swift as the lightning, or the northern wind,
And far she leaves the panting youth behind.
Again he strives the flying nymph to hold
With the temptation of the second gold :
The bright temptation fruitlessly was toss'd,
So soon, alas ! she won the distance lost.
Now but a little interval of space
Remain'd for the decision of the race.
' Fair author of the precious gift,' he said,
' Be thou, oh goddess, author of my aid !'
Then of the shining fruit the last he drew,
And with his full-collected vigour threw ;
The virgin still the longer to detain,
Threw not directly, but across the plain.
She seem'd awhile perplex'd in dubious thought,
If the far distant apple should be sought :
I lured her backward mind to seize the bait,
And to the massy gold gave double weight :
My favour to my votary was show'd ;
Her speed I lessen'd, and increased her load.
But lest, though long, the rapid race be won,
Before my longer tedious tale is done,
The youth the goal, and so the virgin, won.

THE STORY OF ACIS, POLYPHEMUS AND GALATEA.

GALATEA, a sea-nymph, was attached to Acis a shepherd of Sicily, by whom she was beloved in return. The Cyclops Polyphemus became enamoured of her, but she rejected his suit with disdain. While lamenting her coldness

and indifference, he accidentally perceived the lovers seated in a cave below the promontory on which he stood. Stung with jealousy and resentment at the sight of their happiness, he hurled an immense fragment of rock upon the unfortunate Acis, by which he was crushed to death. Galathea, inconsolable for his loss, changed him into a fountain.

“ Acis, the lovely youth, whose loss I mourn,
From Faunus, and the nymph Symethis, born,
Was both his parents’ pleasure, but to me,
Was all that love could make a lover be.
The gods our minds in mutual bands did join,
I was his only joy, and he was mine.
Now sixteen summers the fair youth had seen,
And doubtful down began to shade his chin,
When Polyphemus* first disturbed our joy,
And loved me madly, as I loved the boy.
Ask not which passion in my soul was higher,
My last aversion, or my first desire,
Nor this the greater was, nor that the less,
Both were alike, for both were in excess.
Thee, Venus, thee, both heaven and earth obey,
Immense thy power, and boundless is thy sway.
The cyclops, who defied the ethereal throne,
And thought no thunder louder than his own,
The terror of the woods, and wilder far
Than wolves in plains, or bears in forests, are ;
The inhuman host, who made his bloody feasts
Of mangled members of his butcher’d guests,
Yet felt the force of love ; he me admir’d,
And strove to win me, with a zeal untir’d,
Forgot his caverns and his woolly care,
Assumed the softness of a lover’s air,
And comb’d, with teeth of rakes, his rugged hair :
Now with a crooked scythe his beard he sleeks,
And mows the stubborn stubble of his cheeks ;
Now in the crystal stream he looks, to try

* Polyphemus, a son of Neptune, was king of all the Cyclopes in Sicily. The Cyclopes were a race of men of gigantic stature, with only one eye in the middle of their forehead. They inhabited the western part of the island of Sicily, and from their vicinity to mount *Ætna*, are supposed to have been the workmen of Vulcan, and to have fabricated the thunderbolts of Jupiter.

His courteous bows, and rolls his glaring eye.
His cruelty and thirst for blood are lost ;
And ships securely sail along the coast.

" The prophet Telemus (arrived by chance
Where *Ætna's* summits to the seas advance,
Who mark'd the tracks of every bird that flew,
And sure presages from their flying drew)
Foretold the Cyclop that Ulysses' hand
In his broad eye should thrust a flaming brand.
The giant, with a scornful grin, replied,
' Vain augur, thou hast falsely prophesied ;
Already love his flaming brand has toss'd,
Looking on two fair eyes my sight I lost.'
Thus, warn'd in vain, with stalking pace he strode,
And stamp'd the margin of the briny flood
With heavy steps, and weary, sought again
The cool retirement of his gloomy den.

" A promontory, sharpening by degrees,
Ends in a wedge, and overlooks the seas,
On either side below, the water flows ;
This airy walk the giant-lover chose.
Here on the midst he sat, his flocks unled,
Their shepherd follow'd, and securely fed ;
A pine, so burly, and of length so vast,
That sailing ships required it for a mast,
He wielded for a staff, his steps to guide,
But laid it by, his whistle while he tried ;
A hundred reeds, of a prodigious growth,
Scarce made a pipe proportion'd to his mouth,
Which, when he gave it wind, the rocks around,
And watery plains, the dreadful hiss resound.
I heard the ruffian shepherd rudely blow,
Where in a hollow cave I sat below ;
On Acis' shoulder I my head reclined,
And still preserve the poem in my mind.

" ' Oh, lovely Galatea ! whiter far
Than falling snows and rising lilies are ;
More flowery than the meads, as crystal bright ;
Erect as alders and of equal height :
More playful than a kid, more smooth thy skin
Than orient shells, that on the shores are seen :
Than apples fairer, when the boughs they lade ;
Pleasing as winter suns, or summer shade :
More grateful to the sight than goodly plains,

And softer to the touch than down of swans ;
 Of curds new turn'd ; and sweeter to the taste
 Than swelling grapes, that to the vintage haste :
 More clear than ice, or running streams, that stray
 Through garden plots, but, ah ! more swift than they.

“ ‘ Yet, Galatea, harder to be broke
 Than bullocks, unreclaim'd to bear the yoke,
 And far more stubborn than the knotted oak :
 Like sliding streams, impossible to hold ;
 Like them fallacious, like their fountains cold ;
 More warping than the willow, to decline
 My kind caress, more brittle than the vine ;
 Immoveable and fix'd in thy disdain :
 Rough as these rocks, and of a harder grain.
 More violent than is the rising flood ;
 And the praised peacock is not half so proud.
 Fierce as the fire, and sharp as thistles are,
 And more outrageous than a mother bear :
 Deaf as the billows to the vows I make ;
 And more revengeful than a trodden snake.
 In swiftness fleetier than the flying hind,
 Or driven tempests, or the driving wind.
 All other faults with patience I can bear,
 But swiftness is the vice I only fear.

“ ‘ Yet, if you knew me well, you would not shun
 My love, but to my kind caresses run :
 Would languish in your turn, and court my stay,
 And much repent of your unwise delay.

“ ‘ My palace in the living rock is made
 By nature's hand : a spacious pleasing shade,
 Which neither heat can pierce, nor cold invade.
 My garden fill'd with fruits you may behold,
 And grapes in clusters, imitating gold :
 Some blushing bunches of a purple hue ;
 And these, and those, are all reserved for you.
 Red strawberries, in shades, expecting stand,
 Proud to be gather'd by so white a hand.
 Autumnal cornels later fruit provide,
 And plums, to tempt you, turn their glossy side :
 Not those of common kinds, but such alone
 As in Phœacian* orchards might have grown :

* Phœacian orchards. The island of Phœacia, (now Corcyra,) was celebrated for its gardens.

Nor chestnuts shall be wanting to your food,
 Nor garden fruits, nor wildings of the wood ;
 The laden boughs for you alone shall bear ;
 And yours shall be the product of the year.

“ ‘ The flocks you see are all my own ; beside
 The rest that woods and winding valleys hide.

Ask not the numbers of my growing store ;
 Who knows how many, knows he has no more :
 Nor will I praise my cattle, trust not me,
 But judge yourself, and pass your own decree.
 New milk in nut-brown bowls is duly served
 For daily drink ; the rest for cheese reserved.
 Nor are these household dainties all my store :
 The fields and forests will afford us more ;
 The deer, the hare, the goat, and savage boar.
 All sorts of venison ; and of birds the best ;
 A pair of turtles taken from the nest.

I walk'd the mountains, and two cubs I found,
 (Whose dam had left them on the naked ground,)

So like, that no distinction could be seen :
 So pretty, they were presents for a queen :
 And so they shall : I took them both away,
 And keep to be companions for your play.

“ ‘ Oh raise, fair nymph, your beauteous face above
 The waves, nor scorn my presents and my love.

Come, Galatea, come, and view my face ;
 I late beheld it in the watery glass,
 And found it lovelier than I fear'd it was.
 Survey my towering stature, and my size :
 Not Jove, the Jove you dream that rules the skies,
 Bears such a bulk, or is so largely spread :
 My locks (the plenteous harvest of my head)
 Hang o'er my manly face, and dangling down,
 As with a shady grove, my shoulders crown :
 My forehead with a single eye is fill'd,
 Round as a ball, and ample as a shield ;
 The glorious lamp of heaven, the radiant sun,
 Is nature's eye, and she's content with one :
 Add, that my father* sways your seas, and I,
 Like you, am of the watery family ;
 I make you his, in making you my own ;

* “ Add; that my father,” &c. Neptune was the father of Pol
 phemus.

You I adore, and kneel to you alone.
 Jove, with his fabled thunder, I despise,
 And only fear the lightning of your eyes.
 Frown not, fair nymph ; yet I could bear to be
 Disdain'd, if others were disdain'd with me :
 But to repulse the Cyclop, and prefer
 The love of Acis, heavens ! I cannot bear.
 But let the stripling please himself ; nay, more,
 Please you, though that's the thing I most abhor ;
 The boy shall find, if e'er we cope in fight,
 These giant limbs endued with giant might.
 For oh ! I madly love, and thy disdain
 Augments at once my passion and my pain.
 Translated *Ætna* flames within my heart,
 And thou, inhuman, wilt not ease my smart.'

" Lamenting thus in vain, he rose, and strode
 With furious paces to the neighbouring wood :
 Restless his feet, distracted was his walk,
 Mad were his motions, and confused his talk.

" Thus far unseen I saw ; when fatal chance
 His looks directing, with a fatal glance,
 Acis and I were to his sight betray'd,
 Where, nought suspecting, we securely staid.
 From his wide mouth a bellowing cry he cast :
 ' I see, I see ; but this shall be your last.'
 A roar so loud made *Ætna* to rebound ;
 And all the cyclop labour'd in the sound.
 Affrighted at his monstrous voice, I fled,
 And in the neighbouring ocean plunged my head :
 Poor Acis turn'd his back, and ' Help,' he cried,
 ' Help, Galatea ; help my parent* gods,
 And take me, dying, to your deep abodes.'
 The cyclop follow'd, but he sent before
 A rib, which from the living rock he tore :
 Though but an angle reach'd him of the stone,
 The mighty fragment was enough alone
 To crush all Acis. 'Twas too late to save ;
 But what the fates allow'd to give, I gave ;
 That Acis to his lineage should return,
 And roll among the river gods his urn.

* " My parent gods." Acis was the son of *Symethis*, a river of Sicily.

THE STORY OF GLAUCUS AND SCYLLA.

GLAUCUS, a fisherman of Bœotia, having one day taken a large draught in his nets, observed with surprise that as the fishes touched a certain herb, they became inspired with fresh vigour, and immediately escaped from him into their native element. Astonished at this strange effect, he resolved to taste the herb which appeared to occasion it; upon which he instantly conceived a strong desire to inhabit the water, and leaping in, was converted into a sea-deity. After his transformation he became enamoured of Scylla, a sea-nymph; but she rejected his suit and fled from his presence. In despair, Glaucus applied to the celebrated enchantress Circe, to furnish him with some charm to render Scylla propitious to his wishes; but she, instead of affording him the desired assistance, became enamoured of him herself, and endeavoured to make him forget her rival. Failing in her attempt, the sorceress poisoned with magical herbs the fountain in which Scylla was accustomed to bathe, and the unsuspecting nymph no sooner entered the place, than she was transformed into monsters like dogs which barked incessantly. Terrified at this dreadful metamorphosis, she threw herself into that part of the sea which separates the coast of Italy and Sicily, where she was changed into a mass of rocks still bearing her name, and which were universally dreaded on account of the numerous shipwrecks they occasioned.

Now Scylla, fearful of the wide spread main,
Swift to the safer shore returns again;
There o'er the sandy margin, unarray'd,
With printless footsteps, flies the bounding maid,
Or in some winding creek's secure retreat
She bathes her weary limbs, and shuns the noonday heat.
Her, Glaucus saw, as o'er the deep he rode,
New to the seas, and late received a god.
He saw, and languish'd for the virgin's love,
With many an artful blandishment he strove
Her flight to hinder, and her fears remove.
The more he sues, the more she wings her flight,
And nimbly gains a neighbouring mountain's height.
Steep shelving to the margin of the flood,

A neighbouring mountain bare and woodless stood.
 Here, by the place secured, her steps she stay'd,
 And, trembling still, her lover's form survey'd.
 His shape, his hue, her troubled sense appal,
 And drooping locks, that o'er his shoulders fall;
 She sees his face divine, and manly brow,
 End in a fish's writhy tail below;
 She sees, and doubts within her anxious mind,
 Whether he comes of god or monster kind.
 This Glaucus soon perceived, and, "Oh, forbear!"
 His hand supporting on a rock lay near,
 "Forbear," he cried, "fond maid, this needless fear,
 Nor fish am I, nor monster of the main,
 But equal with the watery gods I reign;
 Nor Proteus,* nor Palæmon† me excel,
 Nor he whose breath inspires the sounding shell.‡
 My birth, 'tis true, I owe to mortal race,
 And I myself but late a mortal was:
 E'en then in seas, and seas alone, I joy'd,
 The seas my hours and all my cares employ'd.
 In meshes now the twinkling prey I drew,
 Now skilfully the slender line I threw,
 And silent sat the moving float to view.
 Not far from shore there lies a verdant mead,
 With herbage half, and half with water spread:
 There, nor the horned heifers browsing stray,
 Nor shaggy kids, nor wanton lambkins play:
 There, nor the sounding bees their nectar cull,
 Nor rural swains their genial chaplets pull,
 Nor flocks, nor herds, nor mowers, haunt the place,
 To crop the flowers, or cut the bushy grass:
 Thither sure first of living race came I,
 And sat, by chance, my drooping nets to dry.
 My scaly prize, in order all display'd,
 By number on the greensward there I laid
 My captives, which or in my nets I took,
 Or hung unwary on my wily hook.

* Proteus, a sea-deity, who had the power of assuming various forms.

† Palæmon, a sea-deity, son of Athamas and Ino. His original name was Melicerta, and he assumed that of Palæmon after he had been changed into a sea-deity by Neptune.

‡ "Nor he whose breath inspires the sounding shell." Triton, a powerful sea-deity; he blows a conch or sea-shell.

Strange to behold ! yet what avails a lie ?
I saw them bite the grass as I sat by,
Then sudden darting o'er the verdant plain, /
They spread their fins, as in their native main ;
I paused, with wonder struck, while all my prey
Left their new master, and regain'd the sea.
Amazed, within my secret self I sought,
What god, what herb, the miracle had wrought.
' But sure no herbs have power like this,' I cried,
And straight I pluck'd some neighbouring herbs and tried.
Scarce had I bit, and proved the wondrous taste,
When strong convulsions shook my troubled breast,
I felt my heart grow fond of something strange,
And my whole nature labouring with a change.
Restless I grew, and ev'ry place forsook,
And still upon the seas I bent my look.
' Farewell for ever ! farewell land !' I said,
And plunged among the waves my sinking head.
The gentle powers, who that low empire keep,
Received me as a brother of the deep :
To Tethys, and to Ocean old they pray
To purge my mortal earthy parts away.
The watery parents to their suit agreed,
And thrice nine times a secret charm they read,
Then with lustrations purify my limbs,
And bid me bathe beneath a hundred streams :
A hundred streams from various fountains run,
And on my head at once come rushing down.
Thus far each passage I remember well,
And faithfully thus far the tale I tell ;
But then oblivion dark on all my senses fell.
Again, at length, my thoughts reviving came,
When I no longer found myself the same ;
Then first this sea-green beard I felt to grow,
And these large honours on my spreading brow,
My long descending locks the billows sweep,
And my broad shoulders cleave the yielding deep ;
My fishy tail, my arms of azure hue,
And every part divinely changed, I view.
But what avail these useless honours now ?
What joys can immortality bestow ?
What, though our Nereids all my form approve ?
What boots it, while fair Scylla scorns my love ?"
Thus far the god ; and more he would have said ;

When from his presence flew the ruthless maid.
 Stung with repulse, in such disdainful sort,
 He seeks Titanian Circe's* horrid court.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF SCYLLA.

Now Glaucus, with a lover's haste, bounds o'er
 The swelling waves, and seeks the Latian shore.†
 Messina, Rhegium, and the barren coast
 Of flaming Ætna, to his sight are lost :
 At length he gains the Tyrrhene seas,‡ and views
 The hills where baneful filters Circe brews ;
 Monsters in various forms around her press,
 And thus the god salutes the sorceress :
 " Oh Circe, be indulgent to my grief,
 And grant a love-sick deity relief.
 Too well the mighty power of plants I know,
 To those my figure and new fate I owe.
 Against Messina, on the Ausonian§ coast,
 I Scylla view'd, and from that hour was lost.
 In tenderest sounds I sued ; but still the fair
 Was deaf to vows, and pitiless to prayer.
 If numbers can avail, exert their power ;
 Or energy of plants, if plants have more.
 I ask no cure ; let but the virgin pine
 With dying pangs, or agonies, like mine."
 No longer Circe could her love disguise,
 But to the suppliant god marine replies :
 " When maids are coy, have manlier aims in view ;
 Leave those that fly, but those that like pursue.
 If love can be by kind compliance won,
 See, at your feet, the daughter of the sun."

* Titanian Circe. Circe, a daughter of Titan, (or the Sun,) was celebrated for her knowledge of magical and venomous herbs. She resided in the island of Ææa, on the coast of Italy, and all who approached her dwelling were changed by her magic art into swine.

† Latian shore; Italy.

‡ Tyrrhene seas. That part of the Mediterranean which lies next to Etruria.

§ Ausonian coast. Ausonia, was one of the ancient names of Italy.

"Sooner," said Glaucus, "shall the ash remove
From mountains, and the swelling surges love,
Or humble sea-weed to the hills repair,
Ere I think any but my Scylla fair."

Straight Circe reddens with a guilty shame,
And vows revenge for her rejected flame.
To hurt her hapless rival she proceeds,
And, by the fall of Scylla, Glaucus bleeds.

Some fascinating beverage now she brews,
Composed of deadly drugs, and baneful juice.
At Rhegium she arrives; the ocean braves,
And treads with unwet feet the boiling waves.
Upon the beach a winding bay there lies,
Shelter'd from seas, and shaded from the skies;
This station Scylla chose; a soft retreat
From chilling winds, and raging Cancer's heat.
The vengeful sorceress visits this recess;
Her charm infuses, and infects the place.
Soon as the nymph wades in, her nether parts
Turn into dogs, then at herself she starts;
A ghastly horror in her eyes appears,
But yet she knows not who it is she fears:
In vain she offers from herself to run,
And drags about her what she strives to shun.

Oppress'd with grief the pitying god appears,
And swells the rising surges with his tears;
From the detested sorceress he flies;
Her art reviles, and her address denies;
While hapless Scylla, changed to rocks, decrees
Destruction to those barks that beat the seas.

THE STORY OF HIPPOLYTUS AND PHÆDRA.

HIPPOLYTUS, the son of Theseus and Hippolyte, being falsely accused by his step-mother Phædra of a wish to engage her affections, his credulous father, without listening to his defence, banished him from his kingdom, and implored Neptune (who had promised to grant him three requests) to wreak his vengeance on his son. As Hippolytus fled from Athens and pursued his journey along the sea-shore, his horses were suddenly terrified at the appearance of a sea-

monster, which Neptune, in answer to the prayer of Theseus, had sent to destroy him; losing all command over his frightened and infuriated steeds, the unfortunate youth was dragged among rocks and precipices, until at length being thrown from his chariot, he was crushed to death under its wheels. When his tragical fate was known at Athens, Phædra (having confessed the falsity of her accusations) hung herself in despair, unable to survive one, whose death her wickedness and guilt had occasioned. Hippolytus, at the request of Diana, was restored to life by Esculapius;* he then assumed the name of Virbius, and thus relates his story.

“ You’ve heard, perhaps, in conversation told,
 What once befel Hippolytus of old;
 To death by Theseus’ easy faith betray’d,
 And caught in snares his artful step-dame laid.
 The wondrous tale your credit scarce may claim,
 Yet, strange to say, behold in me the same
 Whom wicked Phædra often woo’d in vain;
 Till, seized with fear, or by revenge inspired,
 She charged on me the crimes herself desired.
 Expell’d by Theseus, from his home I fled,
 With many curses on my guiltless head.
 Forlorn, I sought Pitthean Trœzen’s land,†
 And drove my chariot o’er Corinthus’ strand;
 When from the surface of the level main
 A billow rising, heaved above the plain,
 Rolling and gathering, till so high it swell’d,
 A mountain’s height the enormous mass excell’d;
 Then bellowing, burst, when from the summit cleaved,
 A horned bull his ample chest upheaved:
 His mouth and nostrils storms of briny rain
 Expiring, blew. Dread horror seized my train.
 I stood unmoved. My father’s cruel doom
 Claim’d all my soul, nor fear could find a room.
 Amazed, awhile my trembling coursers stood,

* Esculapius, the son of Apollo, was the god of medicine. He restored many to life, on which account Jupiter struck him with a thunderbolt.

† “ Pitthean Trœzen’s land.” Pittheus was the king of Trœzene, a city of Argolis. His daughter Æthra was the mother of Theseus. See story of Theseus, page 146.

With prick'd-up ears, contemplating the flood ;
 Then, starting sudden from the dreadful view,
 At once like lightning from the seas they flew,
 And o'er the craggy rocks the chariot drew.
 In vain to stop the hot-mouthed steeds I tried,
 And, bending backward, all my strength applied ;
 The frothy foam in driving flakes distains
 The bits and bridles, and bedews the reins.
 But though as yet untamed they run, at length
 Their heady rage had tired beneath my strength,
 When in the spokes a stump entangling, tore
 The shatter'd wheel, and from its axle bore.
 The shock impetuous toss'd me from the seat,
 Caught in the reins, beneath my horses' feet ;
 Where, midst my mangled frame and breaking bones,
 I breathed away my wearied soul in groans.

" And now I saw the darksome realms of wo,
 And bathed my wounds in smoking streams below.
 There I had stay'd, nor second life enjoy'd,
 But Pæan's son* his wond'rous art employ'd.
 To light restored, by medicinal skill,
 In spite of fate, and rigid Pluto's will,
 The invidious object to preserve from view,
 A misty cloud around me Cynthia† threw ;
 And lest my sight should stir my foes to rage,
 She stamp'd my visage with the marks of age.
 My former hue was changed, and for it shown
 A set of features and a face unknown.
 Awhile the goddess stood in doubt, or Crete,
 Or Delos' isle to choose for my retreat.
 Delos and Crete refused, this wood‡ she chose,

* Pæan's son. Esculapius, the god of medicine, was the son of Apollo. The name of Pæan was given to Apollo from the word *pæan*, a hymn, which was sung in his honour after he had killed the serpent Python. Pluto complained to Jupiter that Esculapius by restoring the dead to life deprived him of his lawful subjects.

† Cynthia, a name given to Diana.

‡ " This wood she chose." Near the city of Aricia, in Italy, was a temple, grove, and lake sacred to Diana. In this grove the goddess placed Virbius.

Bade me my former luckless name depose,
Which kept alive the memory of my woes ;
Then said, 'Immortal life be thine, and thou,
Hippolytus once called, be Virbius now.'
Here then a god, but of the inferior race,
I serve my goddess, and attend her chase."

THE STORY OF ENDYMION.

ENDYMION was a shepherd of whom Diana became enamoured. She beheld him sleeping on Mount Latmus,* and was so struck by his beauty that she nightly descended from heaven to watch over his slumbers. Endymion obtained from Jupiter the gifts of eternal youth and perpetual sleep.

THE STORY OF APOLLO AND THE SIBYL.

APOLLO became enamoured of the celebrated Sibyl of Cumæ, and offered to grant her whatever she required. She demanded to live as many years as the number of grains of sand which she held in her hand, but unfortunately forgot to stipulate for the enjoyment of youth, health, and beauty. She had already lived seven hundred years when Æneas arrived in Italy, and had three centuries more to exist before her years were as numerous as the grains of sand which she had held. She gave Æneas instructions how to find his father in the infernal regions, to the entrance of which she conducted him. She thus relates to him her story :

"I am no deity," replied the dame,
"But mortal, and religious rites disclaim,
With gifts Apollo sought my love, and said :
'Have all you wish, my fair Cumæan maid.'
I paused : then pointing to a heap of sand,

* Latmus ; a mountain of Caria, in Asia Minor, in whose cave the moon was said by the poets to visit Endymion.

'For every grain, to live a year demand.'
 But, ah! unmindful of th' effect of time,
 Forgot to covenant for youth and prime.
 The smiling bloom I boasted once is gone,
 And feeble age with lagging limbs creeps on.
 Seven centuries have I lived; three more fulfil
 The period of the years to finish still.
 This wither'd frame (so fates have will'd) shall waste
 To nothing but prophetic words at last."*

THE APPLE OF DISCORD, AND THE DECISION OF PARIS.

THE nuptials of Peleus,† king of Thessaly, and Thetis, a sea-deity, were graced by the presence of all the gods and goddesses, except Discordia, who alone had not been invited to attend. Stung with resentment at the insult, she determined to interrupt the harmony of the festivity, and in order to create dissension, threw in the midst of the assembly a golden apple, on which these words were inscribed, "For the Fairest." Juno, Minerva, and Venus, whose charms alone entitled them to dispute the prize, agreed to refer the decision of their mutual claims to Paris, son of Priam, king of Troy. The goddesses accordingly appeared before him, each endeavouring by bribes and entreaties to influence his judgment in her favour. Juno promised him a kingdom; Minerva, military fame; and Venus, the most beautiful woman in the world for his wife. This last temptation proved irresistible, and Paris adjudged the prize to Venus.

When fair Hæmonia's‡ lofty mountains rung,
 With hymeneal songs for Peleus sung,

* "To nothing but prophetic words at last." The Sibyllæ were certain women supposed to be inspired by heaven, who flourished in different parts of the world. The most celebrated was the Sibyl of Cumæ, in Italy. It was usual for the Sibyl to write her prophecies on the leaves of trees which she placed at the entrance of her cave, and it required particular care in those who consulted her to take up these leaves carefully before they were dispersed by the wind, as their meaning then became incomprehensible.

† Peleus and Thetis were the parents of the renowned Achilles.

‡ "Hæmonia's lofty mountains." Hæmonia was a name ancient-

And all the gods to Thetis' nuptials came,
 Sister of Amphitrite,* honour'd dame ;
 Officious Ganymedes,† at Jove's request,
 Supplied with sparkling wine each welcome guest.
 Earth-shaking Neptune left his azure main,
 And Jove supreme forsook his starry plain :
 From Helicon,‡ with odorous shrubs o'erspread,
 The muses' tuneful choir Apollo led.
 Him Juno follow'd, wife of sovereign Jove :
 With harmony the smiling queen of love
 Hasten'd to join the gods of Chiron's§ festive grove.
 Cupid's full quiver o'er her shoulder thrown,
 Persuasion follow'd with a bridal crown.
 Minerva, though to nuptial rites a foe,
 Came ; but no helmet nodded o'er her brow.
 Diana to the centaur's grove resorts,
 And for one day forgets her rural sports.
 His loose locks shaking as the zephyrs play'd,
 Not long behind convivial Bacchus stay'd.
 War's god,|| as when to Vulcan's dome he sped,
 No spear his hand sustain'd, no casque his head,
 Such now, without his helmet or his lance,
 Smiling he look'd, and led the bridal dance.
 But from these blissful scenes was Discord warn'd ;
 Peleus rejected her, and Chiron scorn'd.
 Now, stung with envy, Discord roam'd, nor ceas'd
 Her baneful arts to interrupt the feast.
 The burnish'd apples, rich with golden rind,
 Growth of Hesperian gardens,¶ struck her mind.
 Resolv'd contention's baneful seeds to sow,
 She tore the blushing apple from its bough,

ly applied to Thessaly. The nuptials of Peleus and Thetis were celebrated on Mount Pelion in Thessaly.

* Amphitrite ; the wife of Neptune.

† Ganymedes ; a beautiful youth whom Jupiter carried to heaven, and installed in the office of cup-bearer to the gods.

‡ Helicon ; a mountain of Bœotia, near the gulf of Corinth, sacred to Apollo and the Muses.

§ "Chiron's festive grove." Mount Pelion was the favourite haunt of the Centaur Chiron, whose cave occupied the highest point of the mountain.

|| War's god. Mars.

¶ Hesperian gardens. The fruit of the Hesperian gardens was of gold. They belonged to Atlas, king of Africa.

Grasp'd the dire source whence future battles sprung,
And 'midst the gods the golden mischief flung.

The stately wife of Jove with wondering eyes
Beheld, and wish'd to grasp the golden prize.
Beauty's fair queen to catch the apple strove ;
For 'tis the prize of beauty and of love.
Jove mark'd the contest, and, to crush debate,
Thus counsell'd Hermes,* who beside him sat :
" Paris,† perchance, from Priam sprung, you know :
His herds he grazes on mount Ida's‡ brow,
And oft conducts them to the dewy meads,
Through which his streams the Phrygian Xanthus§ leads :
Show him yon prize, and urge him to declare
Which of these goddesses he deems most fair :
In whom, of all, his matchless skill can trace
The close arch'd eye-brow and the roundest face,
On such a face, where bends the circling bow,
The golden apple, beauty's prize, bestow."

Thus spoke the sire : the willing son obey'd,
And to their judge the goddesses convey'd.
Each anxious fair her charms to heighten tries,
And dart new lustro from her sparkling eyes.
Her veil aside insidious Venus flung ;
Loose from the clasp her fragrant ringlets hung ;
She then in golden gauls each curl compress'd,
Summon'd her little loves, and thus address'd :

" Behold, my sons, the hour of trial near !
Embrace, my loves, and bid me banish fear.
This day's decision will enhance my fame,
Crown beauty's queen, or sink in endless shame.
Doubting I stand, to whom the swain may say,
Bear thou, most fair, the golden prize away.
Nurs'd was each grace by Juno's fostering hand ;

* *Hermès*, a name given by the Greeks to Mercury.

† It having been foretold by an oracle that Paris, the son of Priam king of Troy, would occasion the ruin of his country, he was exposed when an infant on Mount Ida, where the shepherds of the place found him, and educated him as their son. When called upon to decide the respective claims of the goddesses to the prize of beauty, he was still in the humble guise of a shepherd ; but being shortly after recognized and acknowledged by his father, he assumed his state among the princes of Troy.

‡ *Ida*, a mountainous range of Troas, in Asia Minor.

§ *Xanthus*, a river of Troas, Asia Minor ; it was called *Xanthus* by the gods, and *Scamander* by men.

And crowns and sceptres shift at her command.
 Minerva dictates in th' embattled field;
 And heroes tremble when she shakes her shield.
 Of all the goddesses that rule above,
 Far most defenceless is the queen of love.
 Without or spear, or shield, must Venus live;
 And crowns and sceptres she has none to give.
 Yet why despair? Though with no Faulchion grac'd,
 Love's silken chain surrounds my slender waist.
 My bow this cestus,* this the dart I fling,
 And with this cestus I infix my sting."

Thus to her loves the rosy finger'd queen
 Told all her fears, and vented all her spleen:
 To every word they lent a willing ear,
 Round their fond mother clung, and strove to cheer.
 And now they reach mount Ida's grassy steep,
 Where youthful Paris tends his father's sheep.
 A wild goat's skin, around his shoulders cast,
 Loose fell, and flow'd below his girdled waist.
 A pastoral staff, which swains delight to hold,
 His roving herds protected and controll'd.

Beneath the shades which sheltering thickets blend,
 When Paris' eye approaching *Hermès* ken'd,
 Back he retires, with sudden fear impress'd,
 And shuns the presence of the heavenly guest;
 To the thick shrubs his tuneful reed conveys,
 And all unfinish'd leaves his warbled lays.
 Thus winged *Hermes* to the shephord said,

Who mark'd the god's approach with silent dread:

"Dismiss thy fears, nor with thy flocks abide;
 A mighty contest Paris must decide.
 Haste, judge announc'd; for whose decision wait
 Three lovely females, of celestial state.

* "This cestus." Venus possessed a magical zone, (called cestus by the Latins,) which bestowed on its wearer beauty, grace, and elegance, and had the power of exciting and renewing love.

"She from her fragrant breast the zone unbraç'd,
 With various skill and high embroidery grac'd;
 In this was every art, and every charm,
 To win the wisest, and the coldest warm:
 Fond love, the gentle vow, the gay desire,
 The kind deceit, the still surviving fire,
 Persuasive speech, and more persuasive sighs,
 Silence that spoke, and eloquence of eyes."

Pope's Iliad. Book XIV, ver. 314.

Haste, and the triumph of that face declare,
Which sweetest looks, and fairest 'mid the fair :
Let her, whose form thy critic eye prefers,
Claim beauty's prize, and be this apple hers."

Thus Hermes spoke ; the ready swain obey'd,
And to decide the mighty cause essay'd.
With keenest look he mark'd the heavenly dames,
Their eyes, quick flashing as the lightning's flames,
Their snowy necks, their garments fring'd with gold,
And rich embroidery wrought in every fold ;
Their gait he mark'd, as gracefully they mov'd,
And round their feet his eye sagacious rov'd.
But, ere the smiling swain his thoughts express'd,
Grasping his hand, him Pallas thus address'd :

" Regard not Phrygian youth, the wife of Jove,
Nor Venus heed, the queen of wedded love :
But martial prowess if thy wisdom prize,
Know, I possess it ; praise me to the skies.
Thee, fame reports, puissant states obey,
And Troy's proud city owns thy sov'reign sway ;
Her suffering sons thy conqu'ring arm shall shield,
And stern Bellona* shall to Paris yield.
Comply ; her succour will Minerva lend,
Teach thee war's science, and in fight defend."
Thus Pallas† strove to influence the swain,
Whose favour Juno thus attempts to gain :

" Shouldst thou with beauty's prize my charms reward,
All Asia's realms shall own thee for their lord.
Say, what from battles but contention springs ?
Such contests shun : for what are wars to kings ?
But him, whose hands the rod of empire sway,
Cowards revere, and conquerors obey.
Minerva's friends are oft Bellona's slaves,
And the fiend slaughters whom the goddess saves."

Proffers of boundless sway thus Juno made ;
And Venus thus, contemptuous smiling, said :
But first her floating veil aloft she threw,
And all her graces to the shepherd shew ;
Loosen'd her little loves' attractive chain,
And tried each art to captivate the swain.

* Bellona, the goddess of war. She was the wife (or according to some the sister) of Mars.

† Pallas ; a name given to Minerva.

"Accept my boon ; (thus spoke the smiling dame,)
 Battles forget, and dread Bellona's name.
 Beauty's rich meed at Venus' hand receive,
 And Asia's wide domain to tyrants leave.
 The deathful fight, the din of arms I fear ;
 Can Venus' hand direct the martial spear ?
 Women with beauty stoutest hearts assail,
 Beauty, their best defence, their strongest mail.
 Prefer domestic ease to martial strife,
 And to exploits of war a beauteous wife.
 To realms extensive Helen's charms prefer,
 And scoff at kingdoms, when oppos'd to her.
 Thy prize with envy Sparta shall survey,
 And Troy to Paris tune the bridal lay."

The shepherd who astonish'd stood and mute,
 Consigned to Venus the Hesperian fruit,
 The claim of beauty, and the source of woes ;
 For dire debates from this decision rose.*

THE STORY OF HERO AND LEANDER.

HERO, a beautiful priestess of Venus, residing on the shores of Sestos, was beloved by Leander, a youth of Abydos, who swam the Hellespont through storms and darkness to visit her, guided by a torch which she displayed from the summit of her tower. He at last fell a victim to one of these rash and dangerous enterprises, and Hero, in despair, threw herself from her lofty eminence into the sea, and expired on the bosom of her lover.

* "For dire debates from this decision rose." From this decision arose the war of Troy. Paris, recollecting the promise of Venus, visited the court of Menelaus, king of Sparta, whose wife, the celebrated Helen, was the most beautiful woman of her time. Taking advantage of the absence of her husband, he prevailed upon Helen to elope with him to Troy. Nearly all the Greek princes united with Menelaus in taking up arms for the recovery of his wife; they created Agamemnon, (his brother,) commander-in-chief of the combined forces, and after a ten year's siege, reduced the once powerful city of Troy to ashes. This celebrated war took place 1193 B. C.

Against Abydos,* sea-beat Sestos† stood ;
 Two neighb'ring towns, divided by the flood :
 Here Cupid prov'd his bow's unerring art,
 And gain'd two conquests with a single dart :
 On two fond hearts the sweet infection prey'd,
 A youth engaging, and a beauteous maid :
 Of Sestos she, fair Hero was her name ;
 The youth, Leander, from Abydos came.
 Their forms divine a bright resemblance bore,
 Each was the radiant star of either shore.

Fair Hero, priestess to th' Idalian queen,‡
 Of birth illustrious, as of graceful mien,
 Dwelt on a high sequester'd tower, that stood
 Firm on the ramparts, and o'erlook'd the flood.
 To soften Venus oft with prayer she strove,
 Oft pour'd libations to the god of love ;
 Taught by th' example of the heavenly dame,
 To dread those arrows that were tipp'd with flame.
 Vain all her caution, fruitless prov'd her prayer,
 Love gains an easy conquest o'er the fair.

For now the sacred festival appear'd,
 By pious Sestians annually rever'd,
 At Venus' fane to pay the rites divine,
 And offer incense at Adonis'§ shrine.
 Vast crowds from all the sea-girt isles repair,
 The day to reverence, and the feast to share.
 From flowery Cyprus||, circled by the main,
 And high Hæmonia,¶ hastes the youthful train ;
 Not one remain'd of all the female race,
 Thy towns Cythera,** and thy groves to grace.
 From Phrygian plains they haste in throngs away,
 And all Abydos celebrates the day.

* Abydos; an ancient city of Mysia, in Asia Minor, situate directly on the Hellespont, nearly opposite Sestos.

† Sestos, a city of Thrace, on the western or European shore of the Hellespont.

‡ Idalian queen; Venus, so called from her favourite residence on Idalium, a height and grove of Cyprus, particularly consecrated to her.

§ Adonis' shrine. Festivals called Adonia, were yearly celebrated in most of the Grecian cities in honour of Adonis, a beautiful and favourite youth of Venus, who was killed by a wild boar.

|| Cyprus; a large island in the Mediterranean Sea.

¶ Hæmonia; a name anciently applied to Thessaly.

** Cythera; now Cerigo, one of the Ionian Islands.

As through the temple pass'd the Sestian maid,
 Her face a soften'd dignity betray'd ;
 Her lovely cheeks a pure vermilion shed,
 Like roses beautifully streak'd with red :
 And when she mov'd, in radiant mantle dress'd,
 Flowers half unveil'd adorn'd her flowing vest,
 And numerous graces hover'd on her breast.
 The ancient sages made a false decree,
 Who said, the graces were no more than three ;*
 When Hero smiles, a thousand graces rise,
 Sport on her cheek, and revel in her eyes.
 Such various beauties sure conspir'd to prove
 The priestess worthy of the queen of love.

Thus as she shone superior to the rest,
 In the sweet bloom of youth and beauty dress'd,
 Such softness temper'd with majestic mien,
 The earthly priestess match'd the heavenly queen.
 The wond'ring crowds the radiant nymph admire,
 And ev'ry youthful heart is touch'd with fire.

Now when Leander saw the blooming fair,
 Love seiz'd his soul and bade him not despair ;
 Resolv'd the happy moments to improve,
 He sought occasion, and reveal'd his love.
 Now hope and confidence invade his soul ;
 Now fear and doubt alternately control.

Soon as she saw the gentle youth beguil'd,
 Fair Hero, conscious of her beauty, smil'd ;
 Oft in her veil conceal'd her glowing face,
 Sweetly vermilion'd with the rosy grace ;
 Yet all in vain to hide her passion tries,
 She owns it with her love-consenting eyes.
 Joy touch'd the bosom of the gentle swain,
 To find his love was not indulg'd in vain.
 Her lily hand he seiz'd, and gently press'd,
 And softly sigh'd the passion of his breast :
 Joy touch'd the damsel, though she seem'd displeased,
 And soon withdrew the lily hand he seized.
 The youth perceiv'd through well dissembled wiles,
 A heart just yielding by consenting smiles.

Now pleads the youth,—his magic words control

+ " The graces were no more than three."
 " Aglaia, and Euphrosyne the fair,
 And thou Thalia of a graceful air ;"

Her wavering breast, and soften all her soul.
 Silent she stood, and, wrapt in thought profound,
 Her modest eyes were fix'd upon the ground ;
 At length her face with lovely blushes spread
 She rais'd, and thus in sweet confusion said :
 " Stranger, thy words such magic sounds convey,
 With soft compassion rocks would melt away.
 Who form'd thy tongue with such persuasive art,
 To pour delightful ruin on my heart ?
 Ah ! tell me, who thus taught thee to explore
 My lone retirement on the Thracian shore ?
 Thy speech, though pleasing, flows to me in vain :
 How can a stranger Hero's love obtain ?
 But, gentle youth, thy name, thy country tell ;
 For mine, alas ! by thee are known too well.
 In yon high tower, which close to Sestos stands,
 And all the roaring Hellespont commands,
 With one attending damsel I remain ;
 For so my parents and the fates ordain."
 Thus spoke the priestess ; and with modest grace
 Conceal'd the new-born beauties of her face :
 For on her cheeks the roseate blush that hung,
 Seem'd to condemn the language of her tongue.

Then thus Leander the fair maid address'd,
 While tender sighs disturb'd his anxious breast :
 " For thee dear object of my fond desire,
 I'd cross the ocean though it flamed with fire ;
 Uncheck'd, undaunted by the boisterous main,
 Tempestuous winds should round me roar in vain ;
 Nor would I fear the billows' loud alarms,
 While every billow bore me to thy arms :
 The rich Abydos is the home I boast,
 Not far divided from the Thracian coast.
 Let but my fair a kindly torch display,
 From the high turret to direct my way ;
 And while I view the genial blaze afar,
 I'll swim regardless of Boötes' car,*
 Of fell Orion,† and the Northern Wain‡

* Boöte's car ; a northern constellation.

† Orion ; a southern constellation.

‡ Northern Wain ; the four stars in the body and the three in the tail of the great bear, (a northern constellation,) are sometimes called Charles' Wain.

That never bathes his brightness in the main :
 Thy star, more eminently bright than they,
 Shall lead thy lover to this blissful bay.
 But let the torch, O nymph, divinely fair,
 My only safety, be thy only care !
 Guard well its light when wintry tempests roar,
 And hoarse waves break tumultuous on the shore,
 Lest the dire storms that blacken all the sky,
 The flame extinguish, and thy lover die.
 More wouldst thou know — Leander is my name,
 The happiest lover of the fairest dame."

Thus he his vows of love did oft renew,
 Until at length she softly sighed adieu !
 Back to her tower the lovely maid retires,
 To guard with secret joy the signal fires ;
 Her task, secure th' extended torch to keep,
 And his to cross th' unfathomable deep.
 Leander notes with care the blazing guide,
 Then seeks Abydos o'er the sounding tide.

At length dark night her dusky mantle spread :
 Sleep o'er the world his balmy influence shed ;
 All but Leander lay dissolv'd in rest,
 Love kept a ceaseless vigil in his breast.
 Silent he wander'd on the winding shore,
 The deep resounded with tremendous roar :
 Wide o'er the foaming waves his anxious sight
 Explor'd the torch's love-proclaiming light :
 He little deem'd, alas ! its flame would prove
 The blaze of death, though meant the torch of love.

*Now on her sea-girt tower fair Hero stood
 At parting day, and mark'd the dashing flood ;
 While high in air, the glimmering rocks above,
 Shone the bright lamp, the pilot-star of love.
 With robe outspread the wavering flame behind
 She kneels, and guards it from the shifting wind ;
 Breathes to her goddess all her vows, and guides
 Her bold Leander o'er the dusky tides.
 Now dim amid the distant foam she spies
 A rising speck,—“ 'tis he ! 'tis he ! ” she cries ;
 As with firm arms he beats the stream aside,
 And cleaves with rising chest the tossing tide ;

* The following fourteen lines are from Darwin's Botanic garden.

With eager step the boiling surf she braves,
And meets her breathless lover in the waves.

But now relentless winter, that deforms
With frost the forest, and the sea with storms,
Bade the wild winds o'er all the ocean sweep,
And raise the rapid whirlpools of the deep ;
The trembling sailor hears the dreadful roar,
Nor dares the wint'ry turbulence explore,
But drags his vessel to the safer shore.

But thee, bold youth, no wint'ry storms restrain,
Nor all the deathful dangers of the main ;
For when thou saw'st the torch's blaze from far,
(Of watchful love, the bright and polar star,)
Thee not the furious tempest could control,
Nor calm the glowing raptures of thy soul.

'Twas night, and angry Æolus* had hurl'd
The winds tempestuous o'er the wat'ry world ;
Waves roll'd on waves, in hideous heaps are driven,
Swell'd into mountains, and upheaved to heaven ;
Amid the wat'ry war, with toil oppress'd,
O'erwhelm'd with billows, and by waves distress'd,
Leander oft with suppliant prayer implored
The sea-sprung goddess,† and old ocean's lord :
Thee, Boreas,‡ too, he summon'd to his aid,
Nor was unmindful of th' Athenian maid :
But prayers are fruitless, and petitions vain ;
Love must submit to what the fates ordain.
From wave to wave the hapless youth is toss'd,
Now heav'd on high, and now in whirlpools lost ;
Borne on the surge supine, and void of breath,
He drinks the briny wave, and draws in death.
Thus while in fatal rage each wind conspires,
Extinct at once the flame, and lover's fires,
Fainting he sinks, and with the torch expires.

* Æolus; the god of the winds.

† Sea-sprung goddess; Venus, fabled by the poets to have risen from the sea.

‡ Boreas; the god of the north wind.

While on the turret Hero mourn'd his stay,
And fondly sighing, chid his long delay,
Perplexing anguish in her bosom rose,
Nor knew her eyes the blessing of repose.

Now rose the morn, in russet vest array'd,
Still from th' impatient fair the lover staid :
Watchful she stood, and cast her eyes around
O'er the wide beach, and o'er the depths profound,
Haply to spy her lover should he stray,
The light extinguish'd 'midst the wat'ry way :
But when she saw him breathless on the sand,
Stretch'd ghastly pale by death's relentless hand,
She shriek'd aloud ; and from her throbbing breast
Rent the gay honours of her flowery vest ;
Then from the tower her beauteous body cast,
And on her lover's bosom breathed her last :
Nor could the fates this faithful pair divide,
They liv'd united, and united died.

THE PHOENIX.

THE PHOENIX is a fabulous bird, of which Herodotus gives the following account. "The PHOENIX is a sacred bird, which I have never seen except in effigy. He rarely appears in Epypt ; once only in five hundred years, immediately after the death of his father, as the Heliopolitans affirm. If the painters describe him truly, his feathers represent a mixture of crimson and gold, and he resembles the eagle in outline and size. They declare that he contrives the following thing, which to me is not credible. They say that he comes from Arabia, and, bringing the body of his father inclosed in myrrh, buries him in the temple of the sun ; and that he brings him in the following manner. First he moulds as great a quantity of myrrh into the shape of an egg as he can carry ; and, after having tried the weight, he hollows out the egg, and puts his parent into it, and stops up with some more myrrh the hole through which he had introduced the body, so that the weight is the same as before : he then carries the whole mass to the temple of the Sun, in Egypt." According to some authors, the PHOENIX lives six or seven hundred years in the wilderness ; when

thus advanced in age, it builds itself a funeral pile of sweet wood and aromatic gums ; this it kindles by the wafting of its wings, and consumes itself, and from its ashes rises another Phoenix. But one bird of the kind ever exists at a time.

The bird that draws the car of Juno,* vain
Of her crown'd head, and of her starry train ;
And he that bears the artillery of Jove,†
The strong pounced eagle, and the billing dove ;
All these receive their birth from other things ;
But from himself the Phoenix only springs :
Self-born, begotten by the parent flame
In which he burn'd, another, and the same ;
Who not by corn, or herbs his life sustains,
But the sweet essence of amomum drains ;
And watches the rich gums Arabia bears,
While yet in tender dew they drop their tears.
He, (his five centuries of life fulfill'd,)
His nest on oaken boughs begins to build,
Or trembling tops of palm ; and first he draws
The plan with his broad bill, and crooked claws,
Nature's artificers ; on this the pile
Is form'd, and rises round ; then with the spoil
Of cassia, cinnamon, and stems of nard,
(For softness strew'd beneath,) his funeral bed is rear'd :
Funeral and bridal both ; and all around
The borders with corruptless myrrh are crown'd.
On this incumbent, till ethereal flame
First catches, then consumes the costly frame :
Consumes him too, as on the pile he lies ;
He lived on odours, and in odours dies.

An infant Phoenix from the former springs,
His father's heir, and from his tender wings
Shakes off his parent dust ; his method he pursues,
And the same lease of life on the same terms renews.
When in full vigour he begins his reign,
And with stiff pinions can his flight sustain ;

* " The bird that draws the car of Juno." The peacock.

† " And he that bears the artillery of Jove." The eagle was fabled by the poets to convey to Jupiter the thunderbolts which were fabricated for him by Vulcan.

He lightens of its load the tree that bore
His father's royal sepulchre before,
And his own cradle : this with pious care
Placed on his back, he cuts the liquid air,
Seeks the Sun's City,* and his sacred church,
And decently lays down his burden in the porch.

* "Seeks the Sun's City." Heliopolis, a celebrated city of Egypt, situate not far from the modern Cairo : its modern name is **Matarca**. It contained an oracle of Apollo, and a famous temple of the Sun. A solitary obelisk is all that remains at the present day of this once celebrated place.

THE
STORY OF CUPID AND PSYCHE,
BY
MRS. TIGHE.



THE STORY OF CUPID AND PSYCHE.

PSYCHE* was a beautiful nymph whom Cupid married, and so entirely devoted himself to his fair bride, that Venus, indignant that a mortal should thus rob the world of her son, put her to death ; but Jupiter, at the request of Cupid, granted Psyche immortality.

The following extracts are taken from the POEM OF PSYCHE, by Mrs. Tighe: The Poem, consisting of six Cantos, being too long for entire insertion, such extracts only are given as embrace the principal events connected with the story.

ARGUMENT OF CANTO I.

Royal origin of Psyche—Envy of Venus—Her instructions to Cupid—The island of Pleasure—The fountains of Joy and of Sorrow—The appearance of Love—Psyche asleep—Mutually wounded—Psyche reveals her dream to her mother—The Oracle consulted—Psyche abandoned on a rock by its decree—Carried by Zephyrs to the Island of Pleasure—The Palace of Love—Marriage of Cupid and Psyche—Her request to be allowed to visit her parents—Cupid's reluctant consent.

Psyche; a maid of royal lineage born,
By many a noble youth had oft been woo'd ;
Low at her feet full many a prince had sued,
And homage paid unto her beauty rare ;
But all their blandishments her heart withstood ;
And well might mortal suitor sure despair,
Since mortal charms were none which might with hers
compare.

* Psyche; the word signifies the *soul*. Psyche is generally represented with the wings of a butterfly, that insect being the symbol of the *soul*.

Yet nought of insolence or haughty pride
 Found ever in her gentle breast a place ;
 Though men her wond'rous beauty deified,
 And rashly deeming such celestial grace
 Could never spring from any earthly race ;
 Lo ! all forsaking Cytherea's shrine,
 Her sacred altars now no more embrace,
 But to fair Psyche pay those rites divine,
 Which, goddess ! are thy due, and should be only thine.

* * * * *

Indignant, quitting her deserted fanes,
 Now Cytherea* sought her favourite isle,
 And there from ev'ry eye her secret pains
 'Mid her thick myrtle bowers concealed awhile ;
 Practised no more the glance, or witching smile,
 But nursed the pang she never felt before
 Of mortified disdain ; then to beguile
 The hours which mortal flattery soothed no more,
 She various plans revolved her influence to restore.

Bathed in those tears which vanquish human hearts,
 " Oh, son beloved !" to Cupid now she cries,
 " If e'er thy too indulgent mother's arts
 Subdued for thee the potent deities
 Who rule my native deep,† or haunt the skies ;
 Or if to me the grateful praise be due,
 That to thy sceptre bow the great and wise,
 Now let thy fierce revenge my foe pursue,
 And let my rival scorned, her vain presumption rue.

" For what to me avails my former boast
 That, fairer than the wife of Jove confess'd,
 I gained the prize‡ thus basely to be lost ?
 With me the world's devotion to contest
 Behold a mortal dares ; though on my breast

* Cytherea ; Venus. Her favourite residence was the island of Cyprus.

† " My native deep." Venus sprang from the Ocean, near the island of Cythera, now Cerigo.

‡ " I gained the prize." Alluding to the apple thrown by the goddess of Discord, on which these words, were inscribed, " For the fairest," and which was adjudged to Venus, by Paris, in preference to her competitors Juno and Minerva. See page 232.

Still vainly brilliant shines the magic zone.*

Yet, yet I reign : by you my wrongs redress'd,

The world with humbled Psyche soon shall own

That Venus, beauty's queen, shall be adored alone.

"Deep let her drink of that dark, bitter spring,
Which flows so near thy bright and crystal tide ;
Deep let her heart thy sharpest arrow sting,
Its tempered barb in that black poison dyed.

* * * * *

Her vengeful will she then enforced anew,
As she in haste dismissed him from her arms,
The cruel draught to seek of anguish and alarms.

The island of Pleasure is now described, which contains
the fountains of Joy and of Sorrow.

Here Cupid tempers his unerring darts,
And in the fount of bliss delights to play ;
Here mingles balmy sighs and pleasing smarts,
And here the honied draught will oft allay
With that black poison's all-polluting sway,
For wretched man. Hither, as Venus willed,
For Psyche's punishment he bent his way :
From either stream his amber vase he filled,
For her were meant the drops which grief alone distilled.

His quiver, sparkling bright with gems and gold,
From his fair plumed shoulder graceful hung,
And from its top in brilliant chords enrolled
Each little vase resplendently was slung :
Still as he flew, around him sportive clung
His frolic train of winged Zephyrs light,
Wafting the fragrance which his tresses flung :
While odours dropped from every ringlet bright,
And from his blue eyes beamed ineffable delight.

* Magic zone. Venus possessed a magical zone, called cestus by the Latins, which bestowed on its wearer beauty, grace, and elegance; it had also the power of exciting and renewing love. See "Cestus of Venus," note, page 235.

Wrapped in a cloud unseen by mortal eye,
He sought the chamber of the royal maid ;
There, lulled by careless soft security,
Of the impending mischief nought afraid,
Upon her purple couch was Psyche laid,
Her radiant eyes a downy slumber sealed ;
In light transparent veil alone arrayed,
Her bosom's beauteous charms were half revealed,
And scarce the lucid folds her polished limbs concealed.

A placid smile plays o'er each roseate lip,
Sweet severed lips ! while thus your pearls disclose,
That slumbering thus unconscious she may sip
The cruel presage of her future woes.
Lightly, as fall the dews upon the rose,
Upon the coral gates of that sweet cell
The fatal drops he pours ; nor yet he knows,
Nor, though a god, can he presaging tell
How he himself shall mourn the ills of that sad spell !

Nor yet content, he from his quiver drew,
Sharpened with skill divine, a shining dart :
No need had he for bow, since thus too true
His hand might wound her all-exposed heart ;
Yet her fair side he touched with gentlest art,
And half relenting on her beauties gazed ;
Just then awaking with a sudden start
Her opening eye in humid lustre blazed,
Unseen he still remained, enchanted and amazed.

The dart which in his hand now trembling stood,
As o'er the touch he bent with ravished eye,
Drew with its daring point celestial blood
From his smooth neck's unblemished ivory :
Heedless of this, but with a pitying sigh
The evil done now anxious to repair,
He shed in haste the balmy drops of joy
O'er all the silky ringlets of her hair ;
Then stretched his plumes divine, and breathed celestial air.

Unhappy Psyche ! soon the latent wound
The fading roses of her cheek confess,
Her eyes bright beams, in swimming sorrows drowned,
Sparkle no more with life and happiness

Her parents fond exulting heart to bless ;
 She shuns adoring crowds, and seeks to hide
 The pining sorrows which her soul oppress,
 Till to her mother's tears no more denied,
 The secret grief she owns, for which she lingering sighed.

Psyche informs her mother that she has been visited by
 ■ fearful dreams, in which the angry form of Venus appeared
 ■ threatening her with future misfortunes ; but at the close of
 these visions, a youthful champion of more than mortal
 beauty presented himself, who vowed to defend and protect
 ■ her. The alarmed parents consult the Oracle respecting
 the destiny of their child, from which they receive the fol-
 lowing command :

“ In bridal veil, and bridal garb arrayed,
 On a tall rock's high summit Psyche place :
 Let all depart, and leave the fated maid
 : Who never must a mortal Hymen grace :
 A winged monster of no earthly race
 Thence soon shall bear his trembling bride away ;
 His power extends o'er all the bounds of space,
 And Jove himself has owned his dreaded sway,
 Whose flaming breath sheds fire, whom earth and heaven
 obey.”

Psyche, in obedience to the decree of the Oracle, is ex-
 posed upon a rock, there to await the arrival of her monster-
 bridegroom :

When lo ! a gentle breeze began to rise,
 Breathed by obedient Zephyrs round the maid,
 Fanning her bosom with its softest sighs
 Awhile among her fluttering robes it strayed,
 And then, as Cupid willed, with tenderest care
 From the tall rock, where weeping she was laid,
 With gliding motion through the yielding air
 To Pleasure's blooming isle their lovely charge they bear.

On the green bosom of the turf reclined,
 They lightly now the astonished virgin lay,
 To placid rest they sooth her troubled mind ;
 Around her still with watchful care they stay,

Around her still in quiet whispers play ;
 Till lulling slumbers bid her eyelids close,
 Veiling with silky fringe each brilliant ray,
 While soft tranquillity divinely flows
 O'er all her soul serene, in visions of repose.

Refreshed she rose, and all enchanted gazed
 On the rare beauties of the pleasant scene.
 Conspicuous far a lofty palace blazed
 Upon a sloping bank of softest green ;
 A fairer edifice was never seen ;
 The high ranged columns own no mortal hand,
 But seem a temple meet for Beauty's queen.
 Like polished snow the marble pillars stand
 In grace attempered majesty sublimely grand.

Gently ascending from a silvery flood,
 Above the palace rose the shaded hill,
 The lofty eminence was crowned with wood,
 And the rich lawns, adorned by nature's skill,
 The passing breezes with their odours fill ;
 Here ever blooming groves of orange glow,
 And here all flowers which from their leaves distil
 Ambrosial dew in sweet succession blow,
 And trees of matchless size a fragrant shade bestow.

* * * * *

"Sure some divinity must here reside,"
 As tranced in some bright vision, Psyche cries,
 And scarce believes the bliss, or trusts her charmed eyes.

When lo ! a voice divinely sweet she hears,
 From unseen lips proceeds the heavenly sound ;
 "Psyche approach, dismiss thy timid fears,
 At length his bride thy happy spouse has found,
 And bids for thee immortal joys abound ;
 For thee the palace rose at his command,
 For thee his love a bridal banquet crowned ;
 He bids attendant nymphs around thee stand
 Prompt every wish to serve, a fond obedient band."

Increasing wonder filled her ravished soul,
 For now the pompous portals opened wide,
 There, pausing oft, with timid foot she stole

Through halls high domed, enriched with sculptured pride,
 While gay saloons appeared on either side
 In splendid vista opening to her sight;
 And all with gems so beautified,
 And furnished with such exquisite delight,
 That scarce the beams of heaven emit such lustre bright.

* * * * *

Now through the hall melodious music stole,
 And self-prepared the splendid banquet stands,
 Self-poured the nectar sparkles in the bowl,
 The lute and viol touched by unseen hands
 Aid the soft voices of the choral bands.
 But hark! she hears the hymeneal strain;
 And trembling listens to the dreaded lay;
 The swelling sounds approach, awhile remain,
 And then retiring faint dissolved away.

Cupid informs his bride, that although compelled by fate to remain invisible, yet he will ever hover around her, administering to her wishes and pleasures.

Again the band invisible attend,
 And female voices sooth the beauteous bride;
 Light hands to braid her hair assistance lend,
 By some she sees the glowing bracelet tied,
 Others officious hover at her side,
 And each bright gem for her acceptance bring,
 While some, the balmy air diffusing wide,
 Fan softer perfumes from each odorous wing
 Than the fresh blossom sheds of earliest, sweetest spring.

With songs divine her anxious soul they cheer,
 And woo her footsteps to delicious bowers,
 They bid the fruit more exquisite appear
 Which at her feet its bright profusion showers:
 For her they cull unknown, celestial flowers;
 The gilded car they bid her fearless guide,
 Which at her wish self-moved with wondrous powers,
 The rapid bird's velocity defied,
 While round the blooming isle it rolled with circuit wide.

Again they spread the feast, they strike the lyre,
But to her frequent questions nought reply,

Her lips in vain her lover's name require,
Or wherefore thus concealed he shuns her eye.

* * * * *

Psyche entreats Cupid to allow her to visit her parents:

" Oh, were their sorrowing hearts at least apprised
How Psyche's wondrous lot all fears may chase,
For whom thy love prepared so fair a place!
Let but my bliss their fond complaints repress,
Let me but once behold my mother's face,
Oh, spouse adored ! and in full happiness
This love-contented heart its solitude shall bless.

Unable to resist her fond request,
Reluctant Cupid thus at last complied,
And sighing clasped her closer to his breast.
" Go then, my Psyche ! go, my lovely bride !
But let me in thy faith at least confide,
That by no subtle, impious arts betray'd
Which, ah ! too well I know will all be tried,
Thy simply trusting heart shall e'er be swayed,
The secret veil to rend which fate thy screen hath made.

" Yet go ! for thou art free, the bounds of space
Are none for thee : attendant Zephyrs stay,
Speak but thy will, and to the wished for place
Their lovely mistress swift they shall convey :
Yet hither, ah ! return, ere fades the festive day.

Her suit obtained, in full contentment bless'd,
Her eyes at length in placid slumbers close.
Sleep, hapless fair ! sleep on in calm content,
Never again to taste such pure repose.

* * * * *

ARGUMENT OF CANTO II.

Psyche conveyed by Zephyrs awakes once more in the paternal mansion—Envy of her sisters—They plot her ruin—Inspire her with suspicion and terror—Psyche's return to the Palace of Love—Her disobedience—Love asleep—Psyche's amazement—The flight of Love—Sudden banishment of Psyche from the island of Pleasure—Her lamentations—Comforted by Love—Temple of Venus—Task imposed on Psyche conditional to her reconciliation with Venus—Psyche soothed and attended by Innocence under the form of a Dove.

Bright shone the morn ! and now its golden ray
 Dispelled the slumbers from fair Psyche's eyes,
 Yet still in dreams her fancy seems to play,
 For lo ! she sees with rapture and surprise
 Full in her view the well-known mansion rise,
 And each loved scene of first endearment hails ;
 The air that first received her infant sighs
 With wondring ecstasy she now inhales,
 While every trembling nerve soft tenderness assails.

See from the dear pavilion, where she lay,
 Breathless she flies with scarce assured feet,
 Swift through the garden wings her eager way,
 Her mourning parents ravished eyes to greet
 With loveliest apparition strange and sweet :
 Their days of anguish all o'erpaid they deem
 By one bless'd hour of ecstasy so great :
 Yet doubtingly they gaze, and anxious seem
 To ask their raptured souls, " Oh, is this all a dream ?"

The wondrous tale attentively they hear,
 Repeated oft in broken words of joy,
 She in their arms embraced, while every ear
 Hangs on their Psyche's lips, and earnestly
 On her is fixed each wonder speaking eye ;
 Till the sad hour arrives which bids them part,
 And twilight darkens o'er the ruddy sky ;

Divinely urged they let their child depart,
Pressed with a fond embrace to each adoring heart.

Trusting that wedded to a spouse divine
Secure is now their daughter's happiness,
They half contentedly their child resign,
Check the complaint, the rising sigh suppress,
And wipe the silent drops of bitterness.
Nor must she her departure more delay,
But bids them now their weeping Psyche bless ;
Then back to the pavilion bends her way
Ere in the fading west quite sinks expiring day.

But, while her parents listen with delight,
Her sisters' hearts the Furies agitate :
They look with envy on a lot so bright,
And all the honours of her splendid fate,
Scorning the meanness of their humbler state ;
And how they best her ruin may devise
With hidden rancour much they meditate,
Yet still they bear themselves in artful guise,
While 'mid the feigned caress, 'concealed the venom lies.

Psyche is informed by her sisters, that wretched in consequence of the uncertainty of her fate, they applied to a sage for information respecting her destiny, by whom they were informed, that the husband of their beloved sister was a deformed sorcerer : they add

" Yet fearing never to behold thee more,
Our filial care would fain the truth conceal ;
But from the sage's cell this ring we bore,
With power each latent magic to reveal.
This night thyself thou may'st convince thine eyes,
Hide but a lamp, and cautiously await
Till in deep slumber thy magician lies,
This ring shall then disclose his foul deformities.

That monster by the oracle foretold,
Whose cursed spells both gods and men must fear,
In his own image thou shalt then behold,
And shuddering hate what now is prized so dear ;
Yet fly not then, though loathsome he appear,

But let this dagger to his breast strike deep ;
 Thy coward terrors then thou must not hear,
 For if with life he rouses from that sleep
 Nought then for thee remains, and we must hopeless weep.

On her cold, passive hand the ring they place,
 And hide the dagger in her folding vest ;
 Pleased the effects of their dire arts to trace
 In the mute agony that swells her breast.

* * * * *

While yet irresolute with sad surprise,
 'Mid doubt and love she stands in strange suspense,
 Lo ! gliding from her sisters' wondering eyes
 Returning Zephyrs gently bear her thence.

Illumined bright now shines the splendid dome,
 Melodious accents her arrival hail :
 But not the torches' blaze can chase the gloom,
 And all the soothing powers of music fail ;
 Trembling she seeks her couch with horror pale,
 But first a lamp conceals in secret shade,
 While unknown terrors all her soul assail.
 Thus half their treacherous counsel is obeyed,
 For still her gentle soul abhors the murderous blade.

Allowed to settle on celestial eyes
 Soft sleep exulting now exerts his sway,
 From Psyche's anxious pillow gladly flies
 To veil those orbs, whose pure and lambent ray
 The powers of heaven submissively obey.
 Trembling and breathless then she softly rose
 And seized the lamp, where it obscurely lay,
 With hand too rashly daring to disclose
 The sacred veil which hung mysterious o'er her woes.

Twice as with agitated step she went,
 The lamp expiring shone with doubtful gleam,
 As though it warned her from her rash intent :
 And twice she paused, and on its trembling beam
 Gazed with suspended breath, while voices seem
 With murmuring sound along the roof to sigh ;
 With palpitating heart and straining eye,
 She fixed with fear remains, and thinks the danger nigh.

Oh, daring Muse! wilt thou indeed essay
 To paint the wonders which that lamp could show?
 And canst thou hope in living words to say
 The dazzling glories of that heavenly view?

* * * * *

All imperceptible to human touch,
 His wings display celestial essence light,
 The clear effulgence of the blaze is such,
 The brilliant plumage shines so heavenly bright
 That mortal eyes turn dazzled from the sight;
 A youth he seems in manhood's freshest years;
 Round his fair neck, as clinging with delight,
 Each golden curl resplendently appears,
 Or shades his darker brow, which grace majestic wears.

The friendly curtain of indulgent sleep
 Disclosed not yet his eyes' resistless away,
 But from their silky veil there seemed to peep
 Some brilliant glances with a softened ray,
 Which o'er his features exquisitely play.

* * * * *

His fatal arrows and celestial bow
 Beside the couch were negligently thrown,
 Nor needs the god his dazzling arms, to show
 His glorious birth, such beauty round him shone
 As sure could spring from Beauty's self alone.

Speechless with awe, in transport strangely lost
 Long Psyche stood with fixed adoring eye;
 Her limbs immovable, her senses tost
 Between amazement, fear, and ecstasy,
 She hangs enamoured o'er the Deity.
 Till from her trembling hand extinguished falls
 The fatal lamp—He starts—and suddenly
 Tremendous thunders echo through the halls,
 While ruin's hideous crash bursts o'er the affrighted wall

Dread horror seizes on her sinking heart,
 A mortal chillness shudders at her breast,
 Her soul shrinks fainting from death's icy dart,
 The groan scarce uttered dies but half express'd,
 And down she sinks in deadly swoon oppress'd,
 But when at length, awaking from her trance,

The terrors of her fate stand all confess'd,
In vain she casts around her timid glance,
The rudely frowning scenes her former joys enhance.

No traces of those joys, alas, remain !
A desert solitude alone appears.
No verdant shade relieves the sandy plain,
The wide spread waste no gentle fountain cheers,
One barren face the dreary prospect wears ;
Nought through the vast horizon meets her eye
To calm the dismal tumult of her fears,
No trace of human habitation nigh,
A sandy wild beneath, above a threatening sky.

* * * * *

In the mute anguish of a fixed despair
Still on the ground immovable she lies :
At length, with lifted hands and streaming eyes,
Her mournful prayers invoke offended Love,
" Oh, let me hear thy voice once more," she cries,
" In death at least thy pity let me move,
And death, if but forgiven, a kind relief will prove."

Now prostrate on the bare unfriendly ground,
She waits her doom in silent agony ;
When lo ! the well known soft celestial sound
She hears once more with breathless ecstasy ;
" Oh ! yet too dearly loved ! Lost Psyche ! Why
With cruel fate wouldst thou unite thy power,
And force me my adored bride to fly ?
Yet cheer thy drooping soul, some happier hour
Thy banished steps may lead back to thy lover's bower.

" Though angry Venus we no more can shun,
Appease that anger and I yet am thine !
Lo ! where her temple glitters in the sun ;
With humble penitence approach her shrine,
Perhaps to pity she may yet incline.

* * * * *

" Stronger than I, they now forbid my stay :
Psyche beloved, adieu !" Scarce can she hear
The last faint words, which gently melt away ;
And now more faint the dying sounds appear,
Borne to a distance from her longing ear ;

Yet still attentively she stands unmoved,
 To catch those accents which her soul could cheer,
 That soothing voice which had so sweetly proved
 That still his tender heart offending Psyche loved !

Psyche now repairs to the temple of Venus, from which she is sternly repulsed by the officiating priest ; moved at length with compassion at the sight of her distress, and softened by her supplications, he desires her to remove to a distance from the sacred shrine, and to listen to the terms of forgiveness and reconciliation offered by Venus :

“ Presumptuous Psyche ! whose aspiring soul
 The god of Love has dared to arrogate ;
 Rival of Venus ! whose supreme control
 Is now asserted by all ruling fate,
 No suppliant tears her vengeance shall abate
 Till thou hast raised an altar to her power,
 Where perfect happiness, in lonely state,
 Has fixed her temple in secluded bower,
 By foot impure of man untrodden to this hour.

“ And on the altar thou must place an urn
 Filled from immortal Beauty’s sacred spring,
 Which foul deformity to grace can turn,
 And back to fond affection’s eyes can bring
 The charms which fleeting fled on transient wing ;
 Snatched from the rugged steep where first they rise,
 Dark rocks their crystal source o’ershadowing,
 Let their clear water sparkle to the skies
 Where cloudless lustre beams which happiness supplies !

“ To Venus thus for ever reconciled,
 (This one atonement all her wrath disarms,)
 From thy loved Cupid then no more exiled
 There shalt thou, free from sorrow and alarms,
 Adore for ever his celestial charms.”

* * * * *

Hopeless to tread the waste without a guide,
 All unrefreshed and faint from toil she lies :
 When lo ! her present wants are all supplied,
 Sent by the hand of Love a turtle flies,

And sets delicious food before her wondering eyes.
 And as she went, behold, with hovering flight
 The dove preceded still her doubtful way ;
 Its spotless plumage of the purest white,
 Which shone resplendent in the blaze of day.

* * * * *

 ARGUMENT OF CANTO III.

Psyche's Champion with his attendant Constance described
 —Psyche proceeds under the protection of her Knight—
 Persuaded to repose in the bower of delight—Her escape
 from thence—Led by Innocence to Retirement—Psyche
 meets Vanity and Flattery—Betrayed by them into the
 power of Ambition—Rescued by her Knight.

Psyche pursues her journey, until at length overcome
 with fatigue, she reposes in a bower, where she falls asleep.

When roused from sleep before her eyes dismayed
 A knight all armed appears close mid the embowering shade.

* * * * *

Hard were it to describe the nameless charm
 That o'er each limb, in every action played,
 The softness of that voice, which could disarm
 The hand of fury of its deadly blade :
 In shining armour was the youth arrayed,
 And on his shield a bleeding heart he bore,
 His lofty crest light plumes of azure shade,
 There shone a wounded dragon bathed in gore,
 And bright with silver beamed the silken scarf he wore.

His milk-white steed with glittering trappings blazed,
 Whose reins a beauteous boy attendant held,
 On the fair squire with wonder Psyche gazed,
 For scarce he seemed of age to bear the shield,
 Far less a ponderous lance, or sword to wield ;
 Yet well this little page his lord had served,
 His youthful arm had many a foe repelled,

His watchful eye from many a snare preserved,
Nor ever from his steps in any danger swerved.

Graced with the gift of a perpetual youth,
No lapse of years had power his form to change ;
Constance was named the boy, whose matchless truth
Though oft enticed with other lords to range
Nor fraud, nor force could from his lord estrange ;
His mantle of celestial blue was made,
And its bright texture wrought with art so strange
That the fresh brilliant gloss could never fade,
And lustre yet unknown to Psyche's eyes displayed.

The Knight presents himself to Psyche as her Champion
and Protector. She accepts the offer of his services, and
is at length prevailed upon to disclose to him the object of
her journey.

Which having heard, the courteous knight began
With counsel sweet to sooth her wounded heart ;
Divinely eloquent, persuasion ran
The herald of his words ere they depart
His lips, which well might confidence impart
As he revealed how he himself was bound
By solemn vow, that neither force nor art
His helmet should unloose, till he had found
The bower of happiness, that long sought fairy ground.

" I too," he said, " divided from my love,
The offended power of Venus deprecate,
Like thee, through paths untrodden, sadly rove
In search of that fair spot prescribed by fate,
The blessed term of my afflicted state,
Where I the mistress of my soul shall find,
For whose dear sake no toil to me seems great,
Nor any dangers to my search assigned,
Can from its purpose fright my ardent longing mind.

* * * * *

My vows of true allegiance here I plight,
Ne'er to forsake thee till thy perils end,
Thy steps to guard, in thy protection fight,
By counsel aid, and by my arm defend,
And prove myself in all, thy champion and thy friend."

* * * * *

Psyche is rescued by her Knight from numberless perils, until at length under his guidance, she reaches the Temple of Love, where she is re-united to her Lover.

Now safely anchored in the happy port,
Led by her knight the golden sands she press'd :
His heart beat high, his panting breath heaved short,
And sighs proclaim his agitated breast
By some important secret thought oppress'd :
" At length," he cries, " behold the fated spring !
Yon rugged cliff conceals the fountain bless'd,
(Dark rocks its crystal source o'ershadowing.)
And Constance swift for thee the destined urn shall bring."

He speaks, but scarce she hears, her soul intent
Surveys as in a dream each well known scene :
Now from the pointed hills her eye she bent
Inquisitive o'er all the sloping green ;
The graceful temple meet for Beauty's queen,
The orange groves that ever blooming glow,
The silvery flood, the ambrosial air serene,
The matchless trees that fragrant shade bestow,
All speak to Psyche's soul, all seem their queen to know.

On the dear earth she kneels the turf to press,
With grateful lips and fondly streaming eyes,
" Are these the unknown bowers of Happiness ?
Oh ! justly called, and gained at last !" she cries,
As eagerly to seize the urn she flies.
But lo ! while yet she gazed with wondering eye
Constance ascends the steep to gain the prize,
The eagle's eyry is not built so high
And soon she sees his star bright blazing to the sky.

With light and nimble foot the boy descends,
And lifts the urn triumphant in his hand ;
Low at the turf-raised altar Psyche bends,
While her fond eyes her promised Love demand ;
Close at her side her faithful guardians stand,
As thus with timid voice she pays her vows,
" Venus, fulfilled is thine adored command,
Thy voice divine the suppliant's claim allows,
The smile of favour grant, restore her heavenly spouse."

Scarcely on the altar had she placed the ~~wife~~,
 When lo ! in whispers to her ravished ear
 Speaks the soft voice of Love ! " Turn, Psyche, turn !
 And see at last, released from every fear,
 Thy spouse, thy faithful knight, thy lover here !"
 From his celestial brow the helmet fell,
 In joy's full glow, unveiled his charms appear,
 Beaming delight and love unspeakable,
 While in one rapturous glance their mingling souls they
 tell.

* * * * *

But hark ! melodious numbers through the air,
 On clouds of fragrance wafted from the sky,
 Their ravished souls to pious awe prepare,
 And lo ! the herald doves the Queen of Love declare.

With fond embrace she clasped her long lost son,
 And gracefully received his lovely bride,
 " Psyche ! thou hardly hast my favour won !"
 With roseate smile her heavenly parent cried,
 " Yet hence thy charms immortal, deified,
 Shall bloom for ever at thy lover's side ;
 All ruling Jove's high mandate I declare,
 Bless'd denizen of Heaven ! arise its joys to share."

She ceased, and lo ! a thousand voices, joined
 In sweetest chorus, Love's high triumph sing ;
 There, with the Graces and the Hours entwined,
 His fairy train their rosy garlands bring,
 Or round their mistress sport on halcyon wing ;
 While she enraptured lives in his dear eye,
 And drinks immortal love from that pure spring
 Of never failing full felicity,
 Bathed in ambrosial showers of bliss eternally !

3
 THE END.



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